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Rain wreaks havoc: ₹40cr aid for Tripura

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Blackstone's diamond grading firm files for ₹4,000 cr IPO

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Neeraj finishes 2nd in Lausanne Diamond League

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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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Modi's hug diplomacy reaches Ukraine

Modi urges Ukraine, Russia to sit together & end war; says India will play active role

KYIV, 23 AUG

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday conveyed to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy that both Ukraine and Russia should sit together without wasting time to end the ongoing war.

He added that India was ready to play an "active role" to restore peace in the region.

In his talks with Zelenskyy in Kyiv that came a day ahead of Ukraine's Independence Day, Modi said India was on the side of peace since the beginning of the conflict and he would even like to contribute personally for a peaceful resolution of the crisis.

India and Ukraine on Friday inked four agreements that will provide for cooperation in areas of agriculture, food industry, medicine, culture and humanitarian assistance, officials said. Modi's nearly nine-hour visit to Ukraine, the first by an Indian prime minister since its independence in 1991, came six weeks after he held summit talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin that triggered anguish in Western countries. The prime minister reiterated the need for "sincere and practical" engagement between all stakeholders to develop innovative solutions that will have "broad acceptability" and contribute towards early restoration of peace in Ukraine, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said. Modi also asserted India's strong commitment towards respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states. Modi arrived in Kyiv following a nearly 10-hour train journey from Poland in the second leg of his two-nation trip. "Some time back, when I met President Putin in Samarkand, I had told him that this was not the era of war. Last month when I went to Russia, I said in clear words that the solution to any problem is never found on the battlefield," Modi said.

—PTI

>>>More on Pages 3 & 6

Prime Minister Narendra Modi hugs Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, in Kyiv, Ukraine, on Friday ***PHOTO: PTI***

WHAT IS BHISHM CUBE?

PM Narendra Modi presented four BHISHM (Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog Hita and Maitri) Cubes to Ukraine.

- They are mobile hospitals for emergency medical services and are 15 inches in size. They consist of all essential medicines and equipment
- Can handle 10-15 basic surgeries per day and 200 cases of emergencies such as trauma, bleeding, burns, fractures
- These 20kg cubes can be transported by air, sea, land and drones
- They can also generate power and oxygen for a few hours

We (India) are not neutral. From the beginning, we have taken side of peace. We come from the land of Mahatma Gandhi who had given a message of peace to the world

-Narendra Modi, PM

History was made. The Prime Minister of India @narendramodi made his first visit to Ukraine since our country's independence, on the eve of our Independence Day

-Volodymyr Zelensky, Ukraine President

'Security removal of women wrestlers miscommunication'

NEW DELHI, 23 AUG

The Delhi Police on Friday informed a court here that it has rectified the earlier "miscommunication" about the withdrawal of security of the women wrestlers who are set to testify against former Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh. Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Priyanka Rajpoot had asked the City police to file a detailed report by Friday regarding the reasons for the withdrawal of the security cover of a woman wrestler who is to testify against Singh. Additional Public Prosecutor Atul Srivastava clarified that the removal of the security of the women wrestlers was a "miscommunication" and it has been rectified. On Thursday, wrestler Vinesh Phogat claimed that police have withdrawn the security of the women wrestlers.

—PTI

>>>More on Page 4

Girl enroute home from tuition gangraped in Assam

GUWAHATI, 23 AUG

A 14-year-old girl was allegedly gangraped by three people in Assam's Nagaon, triggering massive protests by people on the streets.

The girl was raped while she was returning home from her tuition on her bicycle in Dhing area around 8 pm on Thursday, police said.

Three people came in a motorcycle and surrounded the girl, raped, and left her in an injured and unconscious state on the roadside near a pond. The class 10 student was later rescued by locals, who informed the police.

"The criminals who dared to commit such a heinous crime against a minor Hindu girl of Dhing will not be spared by the law," Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma told reporters. Sarma alleged that after Lok Sabha elections, "a section of members of a particular community have become very active and have been encouraged to commit such crimes. We will, however, come down heavily on the perpetrators and nobody will be spared." The police said that one person had been already arrested and another detained while a search was on to nab the others. Meanwhile, people from all sections of the society hit the streets on Friday morning demanding the arrest of the culprits. Shopkeepers downed the shutters of their business establishments and social organisations demanded action against the culprits.

—PTI

>>>More on Page 3

Locals protest against gangrape of girl in Assam on Friday ***PHOTO: PTI***

24 OTHERS FACE HEAT

Sebi bans Anil Ambani from mkt for 5 yrs for fund fraud

NEW DELHI, 23 AUG

Markets regulator Sebi has barred industrialist Anil Ambani and 24 others from the securities market for five years on charges of diversion of funds from Reliance Home Finance Ltd.

Additionally, Sebi has imposed a penalty of Rs 25 crore on Ambani and restrained him from serving as a director or Key Managerial Personnel (KMP) in any listed company or Sebi-registered entity for five years. After receiving multiple complaints alleging diversion/siphoning of funds of Reliance Home Finance Ltd, Sebi conducted an investigation for the period of FY 2018-19 to ascertain any regulatory violations.

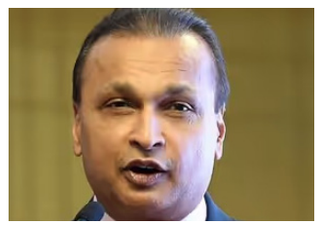
In its probe, Sebi found that Anil Ambani, with the help of RHFL's KMPs -- Amit Bapna, Ravindra Sudhalkar and Pinkesh R Shah -- have orchestrated a fraudulent scheme to "siphon off" funds from RHFL by disguising them as loans to entities linked to him.

Although the board of directors of RHFL had issued strong directives to stop such lending practices and review corporate loans regularly, the company's management ignored these orders.

Sebi said that findings have established the "existence of a fraudulent scheme, orchestrated by Noticee No. 2 (Anil Ambani) and administered by the KMPs of RHFL, to siphon off funds from the public listed company (RHFL) by structuring them as 'loans' to credit unworthy conduit borrowers, and in turn, to onward borrowers, all of whom have been found to be 'promoter linked entities' i.e. entities associated/ linked with Noticee 2 (Anil Ambani)". Ambani has used his position as 'chairperson of the ADA group' and his significant indirect shareholding in the holding company of RHFL to orchestrate the fraud.

—PTI

>>>More on Page 7



Sebi has imposed a penalty of ₹25 crore on Anil Ambani ***PHOTO: PTI***

PHOTO: PTI

FOXCONN INFUSES ₹1,200 CRORE IN KARNATAKA UNIT

NEW DELHI, 23 AUG

Electronics manufacturing giant Foxconn has infused about Rs 1,200 crore, approximately USD 144 million, into its Karnataka-based Foxconn Hon Hai Technology India Mega Development Pvt Ltd, the company said in a recent regulatory filing.

The iPhone contract manufacturer's Singapore-based arm Foxconn Singapore Pte has bought over 120.35 crore stocks of Foxconn Hon Hai Technology India Mega Development Pvt Ltd at Rs 10 per share on 21 August.

The government in a statement last week said Foxconn is planning to invest Rs 25,000 crore to establish a massive manufacturing plant near Dodda Ballapur that will create 40,000 jobs.

"The unit in Karnataka will soon become the second-largest Foxconn plant after China's unit. It will create 40,000 direct jobs, especially for middle-level educated individuals, and our investment will not stop here; in the future, we plan to explore other sectors also," Foxconn Chairman Young Liu said.

With the fresh infusion, Foxconn Singapore has invested over Rs 13,800 crore in the Karnataka unit.

The Karnataka government has allocated 300 acres to Foxconn for its upcoming mobile manufacturing unit in the State.

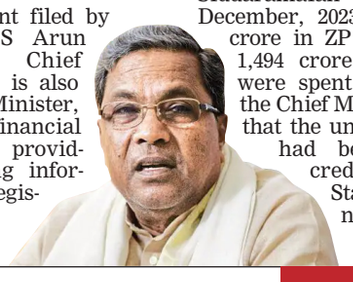
—PTI

More trouble for CM as 1 more case filed against him

BENGALURU, 23 AUG

A fresh complaint was filed against Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday with Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot, accusing him of financial misconduct and misuse of State funds

The complaint filed by BJP MLC DS Arun accuses the Chief Minister, who is also the Finance Minister, of unlawful financial activities and providing misleading information to the legislature.



Arun stated in his complaint that he had raised a question in council during the Winter Session on the unspent balances in Fund-II of zilla panchayats (ZPs) and taluk panchayats (TPs) for the fiscal year 2022-23. According to Arun, Siddaramaiah replied on 8 December, 2023, that Rs 459 crore in ZP funds and Rs 1,494 crore in TP funds were spent. Additionally, the Chief Minister claimed that the unspent balances had been regularly credited to the State's fund, and no balances remained with the boards and corporations. However, after verification, Arun said that Siddaramaiah's reply was false. Arun alleged that the unspent Rs 1,494 crore had not been credited to the treasury. He claimed that the Finance Minister failed to clarify his allegedly unlawful written response. Following this, Arun submitted a protest letter to Siddaramaiah on 23 January, 2024. The issue resurfaced during a Calling Attention Motion in the Legislative Council on 18 July, 2024. In response, Siddaramaiah issued a reply saying the government would address the unspent balances and ensure the necessary book adjustments were made to the funds

Arun also pointed out that the unspent balances from ZP/TP Fund-II had not been credited to the consolidated fund since 2014-15. *—Salar News*

- Arun also pointed out that the unspent balances from ZP/TP Fund-II had not been credited to the consolidated fund since 2014-15.

27 INDIANS DIE IN NEPAL

At least 27 Indians were killed when bus coming from Pokhara to Kathmandu fell into Marsyangdi river, in Nepal, on Friday ***PHOTO: PTI*** ***(More on Page 6)***

AFTER STRIKE

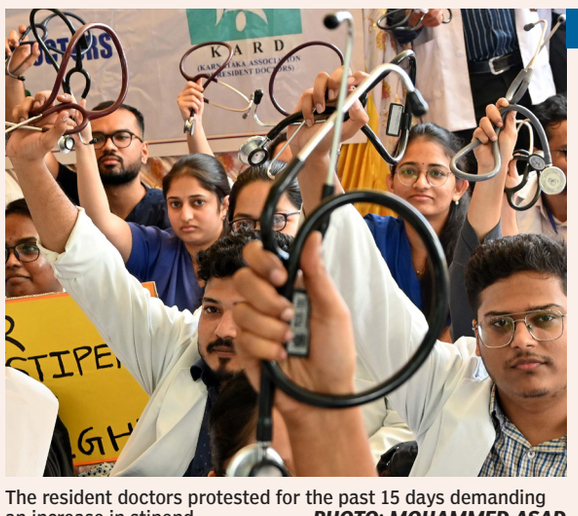
K'taka hikes resident docs' stipend by 25%

BENGALURU, 23 AUG

Karnataka government has increased the stipend for senior resident doctors and postgraduate medical students by 25 per cent after they threatened to launch a strike. Medical Education Minister Sharan Prakash Patil approved the stipend hike on Friday with retrospective effect from 1 August.

This decision comes after the non-emergency services at government hospitals in Bengaluru were disrupted as resident doctors were on strike from 5 to 23 August demanding a reduction in college fees and an increase in stipend. According to sources, for the past 15 to 20 days, only emergency services were available due to the strike.

—Salar News



The resident doctors protested for the past 15 days demanding an increase in stipend ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

Revised stipend

PG Resident Doctors

	Before	After
1st year -	₹45,000	₹56,250
2nd year -	₹50,000	₹62,500
3rd year -	₹55,000	₹68,750

Super Speciality Resident Doctors

	Before	After
1st year -	₹55,000	₹68,750
2nd year -	₹60,000	₹75,000
3rd year -	₹65,000	₹81,250

Senior Residents

Before	After
₹60,000	₹75,000

VICTORIA HOSPITAL TO CONDUCT FREE MPOX TEST IN CITY

BENGALURU, 23 AUG

Health Department will set up 50 isolation beds in the H Block of Victoria Hospital if Bengaluru reports Mpox (Monkeypox) cases. Virus Research and Diagnostic Laboratory at the hospital will also conduct free testing for Mpox cases, Medical Education Minister Sharan Prakash Patil said after chairing a meeting at Vikasa Soudha on Friday to evaluate the precautions for Mpox.

Patil said, "We are also preparing personal protective equipment kits." Although no Mpox cases have been detected in India, Patil said hospitals affiliated with Bangalore Medical College are on high alert. *—Salar News*

India, US ink 2 defence deals amid Rajnath's visit

WASHINGTON, 23 AUG

India and the US have signed two key agreements as Defence Minister Rajnath Singh began his official visit to Washington to further boost the comprehensive global strategic partnership between the two countries.

The agreements signed on Thursday pertain to the Security of Supplies Arrangement (SOSA) and a Memorandum of Agreement regarding the Assignment of Liaison Officers. Singh arrived here on Thursday on a four-day visit to the US.

Through this SOSA, the US and India agree to provide reciprocal priority support for goods and services that promote national defence. The Arrangement will enable both countries to acquire the industrial resources they need from one another to resolve unanticipated supply chain disruptions to meet national security needs. The US will provide India assurances under the US Defence Priorities and Allocations System (DPAS), with programme determinations by DoD and rating authorisation by the Department of Commerce (DOC). *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 4

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh reached US on Friday ***PHOTO: PTI***

PHOTO: PTI

Centre gives ₹5L for landslide victims' families

BENGALURU, 23 AUG

Central government has released Rs 5 lakh compensation from National Disaster Response Fund for each of the nine families who lost their loved ones in the landslide at Shirur in Uttar Kannada district on 16 July. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has responded to a request from Uttar Kannada BJP MP Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri, approving compensation for the victims of the landslide which claimed 10 lives, with another person still missing. The landslide, which occurred on the national highway-66, initially claimed nine lives. However, the toll later rose to 10 and authorities suspect that a total of 11 people may have perished, as another truck driver, Arjun from Kerala, remains unaccounted for. *—Salar News*

Kolar constable arrested for plot to murder TDP leader

KOLAR, 23 AUG

A constable from Kolar has been arrested in a plot to murder a politician in Andhra Pradesh's Chittoor. The constable, Vinayak, was taken into custody by Gangavaram police following an investigation into a suspicious vehicular incident that occurred on 19 August. According to police sources, the incident began when an eicher truck deliberately rammed into the car of a Telugu Desam Party (TDP) leader near Palamaner. The TDP leader, who was injured in the collision, was admitted to a local hospital. The incident was initially reported as a road accident. However, a subsequent investigation by Gangavaram police revealed that the crash was not accidental but orchestrated to allegedly eliminate the TDP leader. *—Salar News*

State to install solar power panels in 40 lakes

BENGALURU, 23 AUG

To reduce dependence on traditional electricity sources, Minor Irrigation Department on Friday said it will install floating solar panels in 40 lakes across the State. The project aims to generate renewable energy by harnessing the power of the sun on water bodies. The selected lakes, located in districts like Kolar, Bengaluru Rural, Bengaluru Urban, Chikkaballapura, and Ramanagara are part of the department's initial phase of the project. This initiative aligns with the State Budget's focus on increasing renewable energy generation through solar panels in water bodies. The project is expected to produce over 2,000 MW of electricity within 10 months from identified tanks. *—Salar News*

Farmer to hold date palm festival on Sunday

CHIKKABALLAPUR, 23 AUG

A former professor of Tumakuru University, who has been growing around 100 date palm trees in his two acres for eight years, is organising a date palm festival at Sagaanahalli in Gauribidanuru taluk of Chikkaballapur district on Sunday. Date palm cultivation is rare in Karnataka. Besides date palm, Divakar Chinnappa has been growing crops such as sugarcane, jowar, toor daal, wheat, paddy, ragi and fruits such as mangoes, sapota and banana organically in the rest of his seven acres. Chinnappa has customers from Bengaluru and its nearby regions and Hindupur and Ananthapur in Andhra Pradesh. During the fourth edition of the palm festival, customers will be allowed to tour Chinnappa's farm in a bullock cart, have lunch and pluck dates directly from the tree. *—Salar News*

MUDA issue: Congress top brass backs Siddaramaiah

CM, Shivakumar meet Kharge, Rahul, Surejwala in Delhi

BENGALURU, 23 AUG

Days after Governor granted sanction for prosecute Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in Mysuru Urban Development Authority case, the Congress' top leadership on Friday expressed its backing for him and alleged that the Centre had unleashed a systematic assault through a "puppet governor" to destabilise an elected government. The Congress said it stood united, would pursue the matter in courts and not be "cowed".

The party made the assertion after Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister and Pradesh Congress Committee Chief DK Shivakumar met Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi at the AICC headquarters here. Congress general secretary KC Venugopal and Congress general secretary in-charge of the state Randeep Surjewala were also present during the meeting. After the meeting, Siddaramaiah said they had explained the situation in Karnataka to the party top brass. "It has been challenged in court. We believe in the law of the land. The decision taken by the Governor is unconstitutional and illegal. We will get justice at the hands of the courts," he asserted.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar with Congress leaders in New Delhi on Friday *PHOTO: SALAR*

Governor sent back 15 bills at the behest of BJP: DKS

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Friday claimed that the Governor had sent back 15 Bills, yielding to pressure from BJP.

—Salar News with Agencies

'NO CONCESSIONS GIVEN'

Land to Jindal Steel as per law, says minister

BENGALURU, 23 AUG

State Large and Medium Industries Minister MB Patil on Friday defended the government's decision to execute lease cum sale deed of 3,677 acres to Jindal Steel Company, asserting that the transaction was in full compliance with the law.

Speaking on Friday, he emphasised that the sale followed a government order issued after a court directive and a subsequent Cabinet resolution, leaving no room for any wrongdoing.

Addressing the press, Patil clarified, "We have not provided any concessions to Jindal. The company paid the market price, and all government regulations were strictly followed.

"The same rules that apply to over 1 lakh industries in the state have been applied in Jindal's case as well."

He added that the issue had unnecessarily dragged on for nine years.

Looking ahead, Patil mentioned that a Global Investor Meet would be held in Bengaluru in six months.

MB Patil *PHOTO: PTI*

He highlighted that Jindal has invested Rs 90,000 crore in the State and created 50,000 jobs.

"In such a scenario, it is crucial that no wrong message is sent to potential investors by the government," he asserted.

Patil further explained that, as per the industrial policy, entrepreneurs provided land by the government were required to utilise at least 51 per cent of it within ten years while keeping their operations running.

The sale contract is then executed as per policy, and Jindal has fully complied with these requirements. *—Salar News*

WONDERS OF SPACE

Minister for Science and Technology NS Boseraju, school students and others at Jawaharlal Nehru Planetarium in Bengaluru on Friday during National Space Day celebrations *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

PEENYA METRO STN BACK TO NORMAL AFTER BACKLASH

BENGALURU, 23 AUG

Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) restored normal operations at Peenya Metro Station after four days of disruptions caused by signalling-related tests. The disruptions had impacted the northern extension of the Green Line, particularly the 3.18km stretch between Nagasandra and Madavara.

To accommodate the ongoing tests, BMRCL announced changes to train timings and temporary service suspensions on certain days to facilitate these tests. It will also suspend train operations for the day between Peenya Industry and Nagasandra Metro Stations on 23 and 30 August, and 6 and 11 September. These disruptions led to increased passenger congestion and long wait times, prompting widespread criticism on social media.

However, BMRCL has now taken steps to mitigate these issues. The corporation has installed additional Automated Fare Collection (AFC) gates and a luggage scanner at Peenya Industry station to improve passenger flow.

Despite the recent disruptions, BMRCL has confirmed that the last train from Nagasandra to Peenya Industry on Saturday, 24 August, will depart at 10pm. The first train from Nagasandra on Sunday, 25 August, will commence service at 6 am. Regular services will resume from Peenya Industry at 5 am on Sunday.

—Salar News

Rahman Khan meets Chief of JPC on Waqf Bill

NEW DELHI, 23 AUG

Former Union minister K Rahman Khan has met Jagdambika Pal, chairperson of Joint Parliamentary Committee on Waqf Amendment Bill, here and submitted their objections to the proposed changes.

Through the amendment bill, the Centre is trying to erase the very meaning of the law and 'Waqf' is being deleted in the name of this law, he said.

To create a separate Waqf board for Bohra and Aga Khani communities is unnecessary because there is already Shia Waqf Board for monitoring their properties, Khan said.

A property is declared Waqf when it is used for religious and charitable activities even if there is no documentation, and the Centre is trying to change this. Khan said the new amendment states that no one can endow property unless he is the legal owner of property and is qualified to endow it; this amendment is unacceptable.

The former MP said the amendments to give Deputy Commissioner the authority to correct the documents related to Waqf properties were also unacceptable. *–Salar News*

Ex-deputy chairman of Rajya Sabha K Rahman Khan with JPC Chairperson Jagdambika Pal and others in New Delhi *PHOTO: SALAR*

New safety steps for docs on anvil

BENGALURU, 23 AUG

The government on Friday suggested a slew of measures to be adopted to ensure the safety and security of doctors working in hospitals across the State.

A meeting chaired by Minister for Medical Education Sharanprakash Patil discussed safety measures for doctors, nurses and hospital staff. Members of the doctors' association were asked to draft a document so that Department of Medical Education can prepare a standard advisory. Special attention will be given to opinions from women doctors.

After the rape and murder of a woman doctor in Kolkata, the safety profile for the working doctors has once again been reviewed, Director of Medical Education (DME) Dr Shobha Rathod said.

According to DME, there are 71 medical colleges including 22 government medical colleges under the Department of Medical Education.

Following the Nirbhaya advisory, the department has been insisting that there are no dark corridors anywhere and all the places should be well lit, Rathod said adding that CCTV cameras should be installed in most of the areas.

All the institutes should have the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) committees. The department is also using Artificial Intelligence for the safety of each doctor. Self-defence training of the doctors and counselling of medical professionals were also discussed, she explained.

"We are also encouraging pink boxes so that in case of complaints, the administration can look into it," Dr Rathod said.

—PTI

2 Cantonment Rly Station platforms to be closed

BENGALURU, 23 AUG

Trains connecting Bengaluru Cantonment Railway Station will not stop at platforms 1 and 2 and instead only on platforms 3 and 4 from 20 September to 20 December, 2024, due to a development work, South Western Railway said.

The following daily trains will stop at platforms 3 and 4 only: Mysuru-SMVT Bengaluru (06269), Murudeshwar-SMVT Bengaluru (16586), KSR Bengaluru-Ernakulam (12677), KSR Bengaluru-Dr MGR Chennai Central (12608), KSR Bengaluru-Kolar (06387), KSR Bengaluru-Jolarpettai (06551), KSR Bengaluru-Whitefield (01765), KSR Bengaluru-Bangarapet (06561), KSR Bengaluru- Kanniyakumari (16526) and Mysuru-Myiladuturai (16232). The following weekly and bi-weekly services will also stop only at platforms 3 and 4 only: Mysuru-Renigunta (22135), KSR Bengaluru-Bhubaneswar (18464), Jaipur-Mysuru (12976) and Mysuru-Darbhanga (12578) and Mysuru-Dr MGR Chennai Central (22681).

For more details, commuters can visit www.southwesternrailway.com or contact inquiry services 0345 6000 650 or 08005282100. *—Salar News*

GANESHA CHATURTHI

BBMP to check idol manufacturing units

BENGALURU, 23 AUG

To prevent environmental damage, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) ordered surprise inspections of Ganesha idol-manufacturing units in the City ahead of Ganesha Chaturthi.

Chief Commissioner Tushar Girinath directed BBMP, Pollution Control Board and police teams to conduct checks to ensure that no Plaster of Paris (POP) idols are being produced. Violators will face fines and legal action.

During a meeting at the BBMP headquarters, Girinath emphasised the need for preparations to ensure a safe and smooth celebration. He ordered the immediate opening of Ekavakshi Kendras across 63 sub-divisional offices. They will facilitate the granting of permissions for Ganesha installations.

PHOTO: PTI

He suggested cleaning water tanks near lakes to prepare for the immersion of Ganesha idols. He also instructed the deployment of necessary staff, installation of CCTV cameras, and provision of barricades and cranes at these immersion sites. To prevent accidents, he recommended arranging ambulances and fire-fighting vehicles near the water tanks, with health personnel ready to provide first aid.

—Salar News

TRAFFIC CURBS FOR JANMASHTAMI AT ISKCON TEMPLE

BENGALURU, 23 AUG

For Sri Krishna Janmashtami celebrations at ISKCON Temple in Malleshwaram, City Traffic Police have implemented traffic restrictions for Sunday and Monday. Motorists travelling on West of Chord Road from Soap Factory Junction towards Mahalakshmi Metro Junction are advised to take Dr Rajkumar Road and make a right turn at either 10th Cross or Kethamaranahalli Junction, rejoining Chord Road at the 1st Block signal in Rajajinagar. *—Salar News*

Visvesvaraya museum to come up near his house

The house in which Sir M Visvesvaraya was born in Muddenahalli, Chikkaballapur district *PHOTO: SALAR*

BENGALURU, 23 AUG

Visvesvaraya National Memorial Trust will set up a museum next year adjacent to the house of Bharat Ratna Sri M Visvesvaraya at Muddenahalli, around 60km from here. The memorabilia of the former Dewan of Mysuru that are currently housed in his house will be shifted to the museum in Chikkaballapur district. "The new museum will come up on an acre granted by State government," Satish Mokshagundam, president of the trust and grandson of Visvesvaraya, told Salar News. "The museum will have more artefacts than that are currently housed in the house and it will be in a bigger space. State Department of Culture will oversee the new museum." *—Salar News*

TRAINING BEGINS

Dasara jumbos enter Mysuru Palace

MYSURU, 23 AUG

The first batch of nine Dasara jumbos, led by golden howdah-carrying Abhimanyu, checked into Mysuru Palace on Friday after a traditional welcome at Jayamarthanda Gate of the palace.

The jumbos will stay for more than 50 days on the palace premises till 15 October. They will be taken out for daily training to take part in Naada Habba Dasara, which is scheduled to be held from 3 to 12 October.

Deputy Commissioner G Lakshmikanth Reddy welcomed the dasara jumbos into the palace between 10.10am and 10.30am. The pachyderms were accorded a ceremonial welcome by a host of dignitaries, including State Congress Working President Tanveer Sait, MLAs K Harishgowda, TS Srivatsa and Conservator of Forest Malathi Priya. Traditional rituals were performed and the elephants were offered sugarcane, fruits and jaggery. The first batch of nine elephants, consisting of Abhimanyu, Bheema, Lakshmi, Varalakshmi, Gopi, Dhananjaya, Rohith, Ekalavya and Kanjan, arrived here from their jungle camp after flagging off the event, Gajapayana, held on Wednesday at Veeranahosahalli, on the outskirts of Nagarahole Tiger Reserve. *—Salar News*

Traditional rituals were performed and the elephants were offered fruits and jaggery *PHOTO: SALAR*

Oppn demands Odisha Minister's resignation

BHUBANESWAR, 23 AUG

Odisha Assembly witnessed a ruckus for the fourth consecutive day on Friday with opposition BJD and Congress both demanding the resignation of Excise Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan over liquor deaths in Ganjam district. As soon as the House assembled for Question Hour at 10.30 am, Opposition MLAs of the Biju Janata Dal and the Congress trooped into the well and raised slogans demanding the resignation of the excise minister. They held BJP government responsible for the spread of spurious liquor in Ganjam and other state. *—PTI*

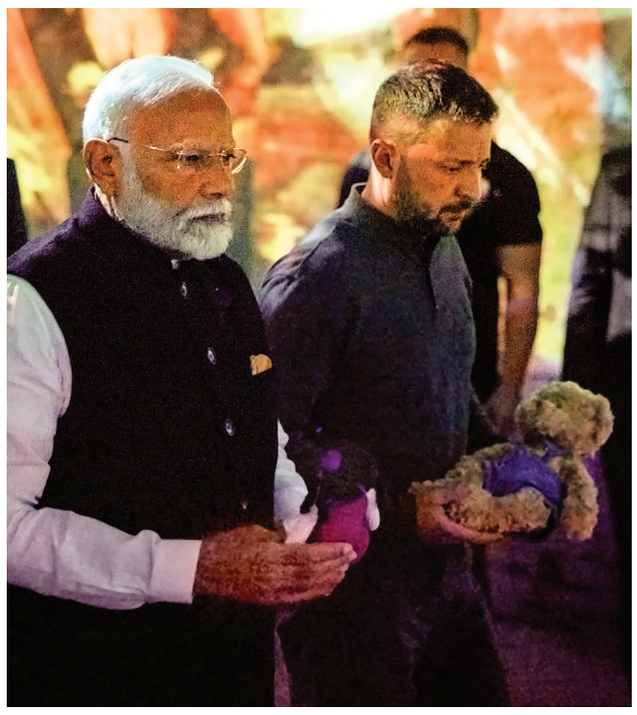
Use Indian dress for convocations: Ministry to medicos

NEW DELHI, 23 AUG

The Union Health Ministry, said the usage of black robe and cap during medical convocation needs to be changed on Friday. In the Health Ministry latest order it had asked all the institutes to change the dress code. It asked the institutions to design an appropriate dress code for the convocation ceremony based on local traditions of the State in which it is located. "The above tradition is a colonial legacy which needs to be changed," the communication said. Ministry asked to submit proposals which will be approved by the Union Health Secretary. *—Agencies*

India, Ukraine ink 4 pacts; to expand defence ties

Pacts focused on trade, pharmaceuticals, agri and edu



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy honour the memory of children in Ukraine **PHOTO: PTI**

KYIV, 23 AUG

India and Ukraine on Friday inked four agreements and resolved to enhance their cooperation in a range of key areas including defence, trade, pharmaceuticals, green energy and education with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy reaffirming commitment to further develop the bilateral ties.

Modi and Zelenskyy agreed to work towards facilitating a stronger relationship in the sector including through joint collaborations and partnerships for manufacturing of military hardware in India.

Though the talks focused on the Russia-Ukraine conflict, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said a significant part of discussions was devoted to the bilateral ties.

There were discussions on trade, economic issues, defence, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, education, he said. Ukraine reiterated its support for India's permanent membership of expanded UN Security Council.

The four pacts signed following the talks would provide for cooperation in agriculture, food industry, medicine, culture and humanitarian assistance.

The leaders directed the co-chairs of the Inter-Governmental Commission to explore all possible ways to not only restore bilateral trade and economic relations to pre-conflict levels but expand and deepen them further.

"Recognising cooperation in pharmaceutical products as one of the strongest pillars of the partnership, the leaders reaffirmed the desire for greater market access and facilitation of investments and joint ventures including through testing, inspection, and registration procedures," the statement said.

India and Ukraine decided to explore the possibility of mutual opening of branches of higher education institutions.

The sides agreed to explore the possibility of involvement of Indian companies in Ukraine's reconstruction and recovery. Modi also invited Zelenskyy to visit India. *—PTI*

EXCISE POLICY

SC defers Kejri's bail plea to 5 Sept

NEW DELHI, 23 AUG

Arvind Kejriwal **PHOTO: PTI**

The Supreme Court on Friday deferred till 5 September hearing on Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's pleas seeking bail and challenging the arrest by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in the alleged excise policy scam.

A bench of justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan allowed the CBI to file its counter affidavit in the matter and gave two days' time to Kejriwal to file a rejoinder.

Senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for Kejriwal, said the CBI filed a counter affidavit in only one of the pleas and it was served upon them at 8 pm on Thursday.

ASG SV Raju said they will file the counter in another plea in one week. The bench then posted the matter for further hearing on 5 September.

On 14 August, the Top Court refused to grant interim bail to Kejriwal in the case and sought a response from the probe agency on his plea challenging his arrest. Kejriwal was arrested by the CBI on 26 June.

The Chief Minister, who was arrested by the ED on 21 March, was granted bail by the trial court in the money laundering case on 20 June. However, the trial court's order was stayed by the High Court.

On 12 July, the Supreme Court granted him interim bail in the money laundering case.

The excise policy was scrapped in 2022 after the Delhi Lieutenant Governor ordered a CBI probe into alleged irregularities and corruption involving its formulation and execution.

According to the CBI and the ED, irregularities were committed while modifying the excise policy and undue favours extended to licence holders. *—PTI*

Droupaid Murmu **PHOTO: PTI**

Murmu voices concern over increasing space debris

NEW DELHI, 23 AUG

President Droupadi Murmu on Friday voiced concern over increasing space debris as a result of numerous satellites being placed in orbit and lauded ISRO for setting itself a target to make future space missions debris free by 2030.

Murmu was speaking at the maiden National Space Day celebrations to mark the first anniversary of the landing of India's Chandrayaan-3 project.

"Space debris can cause problems for space missions," she said during the event at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi that was attended by Union minister Jitendra Singh, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chairman S Somanath, engineers, ISRO scientists and representatives of the country's nascent space industry.

The president appreciated the ISRO System for Safe and Sustainable Operations Management Facility, which ensures continuous progress of space research activities.

"I am also happy to note that India is moving forward to make all its space missions debris free by 2030," Murmu said.

During her speech, Murmu made a mention of the research paper on the Chandrayaan-3 data that proved that the Moon was an ocean of molten magma which cooled down later. *—PTI*

Services hit in WB as doctors' stir continues

KOLKATA, 23 AUG

Healthcare services were severely hit at state-run hospitals in West Bengal on Friday as junior doctors continued their ceasework for the 15th consecutive day to protest against the alleged rape and murder of a postgraduate trainee at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital (RGKMCH) here.

They decided to continue the stir despite the Supreme Court's appeal to them to resume work.

"Our protest will continue till we see the culprits punished. We are not here for anything else. We cannot call off the demonstration suddenly unless our demand is fulfilled," an agitating doctor at the RGKMCH told PTI.

The Supreme Court on Thursday reiterated its appeal to the doctors protesting over the rape and killing of the medic to resume work and directed that no coercive action would be taken against them. The court said judges and doctors cannot strike since they deal with matters involving life and liberty.

The flow of patients at the different government hospitals seemed to dry up as the ceasework by junior doctors continued.

Meanwhile, hundreds of resident doctors here returned to work on Friday after ending their 11-day strike over the case. *—PTI*

Members of nightlife entertainment community protest demanding justice for resident doctor who was allegedly raped and murdered **PHOTO: PTI**

Man threatens school girls with Kolkata-like rape

Nagpur, 23 Aug

Two school-going girls in Nagpur were threatened by an auto driver claiming he would do the same to them as what happened to the resident doctor in Kolkata. They pulled him out, and thrashed him.

—Agencies

MVA withdraws bandh call after HC ruling

MUMBAI, 23 AUG

Sharad Pawar **PHOTO: PTI**

- He said there was tremendous anger over the shameful incident which took place in the Badlapur school

In view of a Bombay High Court ruling, Nationalist Congress Party (SP) president Sharad Pawar on Friday appealed for withdrawal of Saturday's Maharashtra bandh called by the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA).

The call for the bandh on Saturday (August 24) was given by the opposition alliance, of which the NCP (SP) is a constituent, to protest against sexual assault on two four-year-old girls in a school in Badlapur in adjoining Thane district allegedly by an attendant of the institute.

In a post on X, Pawar said the bandh call was given in exercise of fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution, but the judiciary also needs to be respected.

Earlier in the day, the HC restrained political parties or even individuals from calling for a Maharashtra bandh. A division bench of Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya and Justice Amit Borkar said the Maharashtra government shall take all necessary steps to prevent a bandh.

"Due to time constraint it is not possible to appeal in the Supreme Court against the High Court order (on bandh). The Indian judiciary is a constitutional body and in respect of the order given, the bandh call should be withdrawn," Pawar said after the HC ruling.

He said there was tremendous anger over the shameful incident which took place in the Badlapur school. *—PTI*

Mentally unwell woman raped, 5 arrested

CHANDRAPUR, 23 AUG

Five people were arrested and a minor detained for allegedly raping a 27-year-old mentally unwell woman and shooting a video of her ordeal in Chandrapur district in Maharashtra, a police official said on Friday. *—PTI*

HC directs CBI to take over RG Kar hospital graft case

KOLKATA, 23 AUG

The Calcutta High Court on Friday ordered the transfer of investigation into alleged financial irregularities at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital from a state-constituted Special Investigation Team (SIT) to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

The decision followed a petition by former deputy superintendent of the medical establishment, Akhtar Ali, who sought an investigation by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) into alleged financial misconduct during the tenure of the college's former principal, Sandip Ghosh.

Justice Rajarshi Bharadwaj directed the CBI to provide a progress report on the investigation within three weeks. The matter is scheduled for a follow-up hearing on 17 September, when the court will review the report.

The West Bengal government had established the SIT on 20 August to investigate the alleged financial irregularities at the medical college and hospital.

Meanwhile, a special court in Kolkata allowed a polygraph test to be conducted on Sanjay Roy, the main accused in the case. *—PTI*

BJP activists storm Nandigram police station during protest

KOLKATA, 23 AUG

BJP activists on Friday stormed Nandigram police station in West Bengal's Purba Medinipur district during a gherao programme organised in protest against the rape and murder of a woman trainee doctor at a state-run hospital in Kolkata.

BJP supporters also staged gherao agitations at Chinsurah, Siuri, Midnapore and Bankura police stations.

Over 100 BJP supporters stormed Nandigram police station on Friday morning by breaking through barricades and scuffled with the policemen who made attempts in vain to stop them. The protestors, of whom several were women, raised slogans inside the police station. *—PTI*

BJP activists raise slogans during a protest march against alleged rape and murder of a trainee woman doctor in Kolkata **PHOTO: PTI**

Bus driver held for rape in Punjab

Chandigarh, 23 Aug

A school bus driver has been arrested for allegedly raping a Class 12 girl after blackmailing her with her morphed photographs in Punjab's Zirakpur, police said on Friday. The accused had stalked the girl. *—PTI*

Upon resuming work, the cops will be posted at a place of their choice for a three-year period to nurture their children **PHOTO: FREEPIK**

CCTV video shows accused staring at victim

Main accused in the Kolkata rape-murder case, Sanjay Roy, dubbed as a 'sexual pervert with animal instincts' in CBI's psycho analysis, was seen staring the 31-year-old victim doctor on 8 August. Roy admitted to entering the ward that evening. *—Agencies*

Women flee RG Kar hostels, only 17 left

The RG Kar Medical College and Hospital's hostels has seen a decline in the number of women living there. There are only 17 women in the hostel now. It used to house 160 junior women doctors belonging to different courses. *—Agencies*

Suspect in fake NCC camp rape case dies by suicide

KRISHNAGIRI, 23 AUG

The prime suspect in the sexual assault of a school girl at a fake NCC camp at Bargur in the district died allegedly by suicide on Friday, said police.

Sivaraman reportedly consumed rat control paste ahead of his arrest on 19 August, they said.

He was admitted to the Government Medical College Hospital in Krishnagiri, where he was undergoing treatment for fracturing his leg when he attempted to escape from being caught by the police. Later, he was referred to the Government Medical College Hospital, Salem as his condition worsened, and he died today.

Incidentally, Sivaraman's father Ashok Kumar died in a road accident when he was riding a two-wheeler in an inebriated condition on Thursday, a senior police official said.

About 41 students, including 17 girls, participated in the fake NCC camp recently and the incident of sexual assault came to light after the girl narrated her trauma to her parents, who then lodged a complaint with the police.

Opposition parties AIADMK and BJP have raised suspicion over the death of Sivaraman by suicide following his father's demise allegedly due to a road accident and wondered if any attempt was being made to shield the real culprit involved in the sexual assault and abuse of the girls at the fake NCC camp.

Citing media reports, AIADMK General Secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami said the timing of Sivaraman's death before the Special Investigation Team (SIT) commenced the probe into the case, and also that of Ashok Kumar on Thursday night raises doubts. *—PTI*

4-year-old raped by kin in R'than; held

JAIPUR, 23 AUG

A four-year-old girl was allegedly raped by her relative in Rajasthan. The incident happened on late Thursday, when the girl's mother had gone out for work. they said. Victim's mother told the police that the accused lived in the same neighbourhood. *—PTI*

TN cops to get 1 year maternity leave

CHENNAI, 23 AUG

Women police in the State force will be entitled to one year's maternity leave, and upon resuming work they will be posted at a place of their choice for a three-year period to nurture their children, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin said on Friday.

It may be recalled that after capturing power in 2021, the DMK government enhanced the period of maternity leave for its employees from nine months to one year.

"Women police will be given one-year maternity leave and after returning to work, they will be posted either at the place of their husband or parents, for three years, to take care of their children," the Chief Minister announced after distributing the President's medals, Union Home Minister's medals and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's medals to meritorious police officials and personnel at Rajarathinam stadium here.

This gesture was being extended on the request of personnel in the police department, he said.

Additionally, the professional skills of women police will be enhanced to tackle crimes against women and children and so that they can handle cybercrimes effectively, he said.

Tamil Nadu should be transformed into a State free from drugs and crimes, Stalin said. "Arrest the offenders if any violation takes place, he advised."

—PTI

Manipur MLAs object to 'Kuki-Zo' term online

IMPHAL, 23 AUG

Three Manipur MLAs from the Paite and Hmar tribes have expressed concerns about the use of the term 'Kuki Zo' in press statements and social media, arguing that it does not adequately represent their tribes and fails to honour their distinct identities. Tipaimukh MLA N Sanate said, "I remain committed to upholding the aspirations and dreams of my people. I would like to make a solemn clarification that I have never endorsed, nor will endorse, any platform, organisation, or statement that excludes the Hmar nomenclature. Kuki and Zomi are terms used to describe various sub-tribes sharing related customs and identities. *—PTI*

BNSS's Sec 479 applicable to all undertrials: Centre

NEW DELHI, 23 AUG

The Centre told the Supreme Court on Friday that the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita-2023's section 479, which relates to the "maximum period for which undertrial prisoner can be detained", would apply retrospectively to undertrials across the country. Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, told a bench of justices Hima Kohli and Sandeep Mehta that section 479 of the BNSS, which replaces section 436A of the Code of Criminal Procedure, will apply to all undertrials irrespective of the fact that the crime is registered before 1 July, 2024. The top court took note of the submission and directed jail superintendents across the country where undertrials are detained to process their applications through the courts concerned upon the completion of one-third of the period. *—PTI*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Actor Nani calls Hema Committee report 'alarming'

MUMBAI, 23 AUG

Telugu superstar Nani says the Hema Committee report on women's exploitation in Malayalam cinema is alarming and every single person working on movie sets has to set an example on how people are treated in the profession. The 233-page report, perhaps the first such for any film industry in India, details the power nexus in the Malayalam cinema industry and lays bare the multiple levels of exploitation faced by women in it. In the aftermath of an assault case on an actress involving actor Dileep in 2017, the Kerala government appointed a panel to study issues of sexual harassment and gender inequality. *—PTI*

Court scraps bail of 4 in Delhi coaching centre deaths

NEW DELHI, 23 AUG

A Delhi court on Friday rejected the bail applications of four jailed co-owners of a coaching centre basement where three civil services aspirants drowned on 27 July but observed that they were not "exclusively responsible" for the incident. The role of Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) officials who kept the matter of illegal use of the basement pending, even after a complaint from a citizen, speaks volumes about their complicity, the court said. It hoped that the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), probing the incident at the Rau's IAS Study Circle in Old Rajindra Nagar, would bring all culprits to the book. Principal District and Sessions Judge Anju Bajaj Chandna denied bail to Parvinder Singh, Tajinder Singh, Harvinder Singh and Sarbjit Singh, saying the probe was at an initial stage and their specific role had to be ascertained. *—PTI*

India, US ink 2 deals as Rajnath visits Washington

The nations agreed on mutual supply of defence goods & services

WASHINGTON DC, 23 AUG

India and the US have signed two key agreements as Defence Minister Rajnath Singh began his official visit to Washington to further boost the comprehensive global strategic partnership between the two countries.

The agreements signed on Thursday pertain to the Security of Supplies Arrangement (SOSA) and a Memorandum of Agreement regarding the Assignment of Liaison Officers.

"Two important documents have been signed in Washington DC as Raksha Mantri Shri @rajnathsingh's visit to the United States begins. Senior defence officials from both sides concluded the Security of Supplies Arrangement (SOSA), and Memorandum of Agreement regarding the Assignment of Liaison Officers," the Ministry of Defence (MoD) shared in a post on X on Friday, along with some photographs of the event.

Singh arrived here on Thursday on a four-day visit to the US.

The US and India entered into a "bilateral, non-binding Security of Supply Arrangement (SOSA)", the US Department of Defence (DoD) said in a press release on Thursday.

Through this SOSA, the US and India agree to provide reciprocal priority support for goods and services that promote national defence. The Arrangement will enable both countries to acquire the industrial resources they need from one another to resolve unanticipated supply chain disruptions to meet national security needs, it said.

The SOSA was signed by Dr Vic Ramdass, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for Industrial Base Policy, on behalf of the US, and Samir Kumar Sinha, Additional Secretary and Director General (Acquisitions), on behalf of the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

In the Arrangement, the US and India commit to support one another's priority delivery requests for procurement of critical national defence resources.

The US will provide India assurances under the US Defence Priorities and Allocations System (DPAS), with programme determinations by DoD and rating authorisation by the Department of Commerce (DOC). India will in turn establish a government-industry Code of Conduct with its industrial base, where Indian firms will voluntarily agree to make every reasonable effort to provide the US priority support, the release said. *—PTI*

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh with officials in the United States on Thursday PHOTO: ANI

HAL shares rise after Singh's visit

Shares of Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL) surged nearly 2% on Friday following the signing of the Securities of Supplies Agreement (SOSA) between the United States and India during Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's visit to the US. The key focus is on securing the delivery of General Electric's F2404 engines.

Rescue work underway after an Indian number plate bus with 40 passengers fell into the Marsyangdi river in Nepal on Friday PHOTO: PTI

27 Indians killed in Nepal bus accident

KATHMANDU, 23 AUG

At least 27 people were killed and 16 others injured after an Indian tourist bus veered off the highway and fell 150m into the fast-flowing Marsyangdi River in central Nepal on Friday, authorities said.

The bus from Gorakhpur was heading toward the capital Kathmandu from the resort town of Pokhara when it drove off the highway in Aaina Pahara in the Tanahun district. There were 43 people, including the driver and the co-driver, in the bus with the registration number UP 53 FT 7623.

According to Deputy Superintendent of Police of the Armed Police Force (APF) Shailendra Thapa, 14 bodies were retrieved from the crash site and 16 injured were rushed to a local hospital.

The bus that fell on the river bank has been badly damaged.

An MI 17 helicopter of the Nepal Army has left for the accident site at Anbu Khaireni in Tanahun district with a medical team for the rescue operation, the MyRepublica news portal reported.

The Gandaki Province Police Office, Pokhara, said 15 of those rescued can speak.

Nepal's rivers are generally fast-flowing due to the mountainous terrain. Heavy monsoon downpours in the past few days have swollen the waterways and turned them murky brown, making it even more difficult to see the wreckage.

Monsoon season brings heavy rains to Nepal from June to September, often triggering landslides in the mountainous Himalayan country. *—PTI*

Unemployed at high risk of heart disease

NEW DELHI, 23 AUG

An Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) -led study, which estimated risk of adults in India developing heart disease over a 10-year period, found that those unemployed were at a significantly higher risk, followed by those having high blood sugar levels.

Researchers analysed nearly 4,500 adults aged 40-69 years, about half of whom were younger (40-49 years old). Data was collected using surveys and questionnaires, including those developed by the World Health Organization (WHO), such as for gauging one's physical activity levels.

Researchers analysed nearly 4,500 adults aged 40-69 years, about half of whom were younger (40-49 years old). Data was collected using surveys and questionnaires, including those developed by the World Health Organization (WHO), such as for gauging one's physical activity levels.

Among the study group, about 85 per cent were at a very low-to-low chance of developing cardiovascular diseases. *—PTI*

BJYM workers clash with cops in Ranchi, several hurt

Security personnel use water cannons to disperse a gathering of BJYM workers during 'Yuva Aakrosh Rally', in Ranchi, on Friday PHOTO: PTI

RANCHI, 23 AUG

The Jharkhand Police on Friday used tear gas shells, water cannons and fired rubber bullets to disperse Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) workers who broke barricades during a protest rally here against the "injustice" meted out by the Hemant Soren government and its "failure to fulfil election promises".

The police baton-charged the protesters, gathered in the rally, when they tried to march towards Chief Minister Hemant Soren's residence, which is located near the Morabadi Ground, the venue of the protest programme, a police officer said. A scuffle broke out between BYJM workers and police with both sides claiming that several protesters and policemen were injured in the melee. *—PTI*

Rain wreaks havoc: ₹40cr aid for Tripura

A view of the flood-affected areas in Tripura from a chopper; Indian Army personnel evacuate people from a flood affected area during their rescue operation in Tripura PHOTO: PTI

NEW DELHI, 23 AUG

The Centre has approved the release of Rs 40 crore for flood-hit Tripura, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Friday.

22 people have died and two others went missing following incessant rainfall, floods and landslides in the past few days, officials said.

Rajasthan

Monsoon activity continuein Rajasthan with very heavy rain pounding some places in Pali district, in the last 24 hours, the meteorological department here said.Rain activities will continue in many parts of eastern Rajasthan till 28 August, the weather office said.

Gujarat

Gujarat government announced a relief package of Rs 350 crore for farmers who suffered losses due to heavy rains in several parts of the state in July this year. Incessant and heavy rains were recorded in these nine districts between 18 and 24 July which resulted in damage to standing crops, horticulture produce.

Uttarakhand

Four labourers from Nepal were killed early Friday in a landslide in Rudraprayag district, while one person was swept away in the Ganga in Haridwar district as heavy overnight rain lashed various parts of Uttarakhand.

Landslides triggered by heavy rain also blocked the national highways to Badrinath, Kedarnath and Yamunotri.

West Bengal

The Met office said a low pressure area over north Bengal, coupled with an active monsoon, will bring heavy rainfall across most of West Bengal till 26 August.

South Bengal districts are expected to experience the most intense rainfall during this period, Met officials said.

Madhya Pradesh

Five people were killed after the roof of an under-construction cottage at a resort collapsed in Indore district amid heavy rains, police said on Friday. *—PTI*

Teen boy drowns in waterlogged Delhi road

NEW DELHI, 23 AUG

A 15-year-old boy drowned in a waterlogged road near The British School in central Delhi's Chanakya Puri area following heavy rain in parts of city on Friday, officials said.

The deceased, Sourabh, lived with his family at the Vivekanand Camp in the same area, the police said.

According to the police, Sourabh and some of his friends were playing in the rain on the waterlogged road near the British School when he accidently ventured into deep water and drowned.

The victim's friends informed his family members, who immediately reached the spot, pulled him out of the water and rushed him to the hospital, where he was declared dead on arrival, the officials said.

The police said the body of the victim has been sent for postmortem and further investigations are underway. *—PTI*

Vinesh Phogat PHOTO: PTI

'SECURITY REMOVAL OF WOMEN WRESTLERS A MISCOMMUNICATION'

NEW DELHI, 23 AUG

The Delhi Police on Friday informed a court here that it has rectified the earlier "miscommunication" about the withdrawal of security of the women wrestlers who are set to testify against former Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh.

Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Priyanka Rajpoot had asked the City police to file a detailed report by Friday regarding the reasons for the withdrawal of the security cover of a woman wrestler who is to testify against Singh.

Additional Public Prosecutor Atul Srivastava clarified that the removal of the security of the women wrestlers was a "miscommunication".

"It has been rectified," he said.

On Thursday evening, top wrestler Vinesh Phogat claimed on X that police have withdrawn the security of the women wrestlers who are to depose against Singh in the sexual harassment case against him. *—PTI*

OVER NON-QUALIFIED MEMBERS

DGCA slaps ₹90 lakh fine on Air India

NEW DELHI, 23 AUG

Aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has imposed a penalty of Rs 90 lakh on Air India for operating a flight with non-qualified crew members. Besides, the watchdog has slapped fines of Rs 6 lakh and Rs 3 lakh on Air India's Director of Operations and Director of Training, respectively, for the lapse.

In a release, the DGCA said the pilot concerned has been warned to exercise caution to prevent such occurrences in future.

"Air India Ltd operated a flight commanded by a non-trainer line captain paired with a non-line-released first officer which has been viewed by the regulator as a serious scheduling incident having significant safety ramifications," the release said.

After the incident came to its notice through a voluntary report submitted by the airline on 10 July, the regulator investigated the operations of the carrier, including examination of documentation and spot check of the scheduling facility.

"Based on investigation, it was prima facie revealed that there are deficiencies and multiple violations of the regulatory provisions by several post holders and staff, which could significantly affect safety," the release said.

DGCA also said the flight's commander and the post holders of the airline were provided an opportunity to explain their position through show-cause notices issued on 22 Jul.

The reply submitted by the concerned persons failed to provide satisfactory justification. As such, DGCA has initiated enforcement action in terms of provisions of the extant rules/ regulations and imposed the above penalty, the watchdog noted.

Earlier also, the airline had faced enforcement action from the regulator for certain violations. *—PTI*

Earlier too, the airline had faced enforcement action from the regulator for certain violations PHOTO: AIRINDIA

4 injured in fire mishap at pharma factory in Andhra

PARAWADA, 23 AUG

Close on the heels of a vapour cloud explosion at a pharmaceutical unit in Anakapalli district, another industrial accident occurred in a factory on Friday, in which four workers were seriously injured.

Anakapalli Superintendent of Police M Deepika Patil said a fire broke out around 1 am in a factory at Parawada in Jawaharlal Nehru Pharma City (JN Pharma City).An official statement noted that the accident occurred at Synergene Active Ingredients Pvt Ltd. "No deaths, four injured. It was a flash fire. A chemical power and a chemical liquid were being mixed... The vapours got ignited by static electricity and there were four workers, from Jharkhand, present in the room," Patil said.

However, she said the situation is under control now.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu enquired about the incident with the officials. He directed officials to provide better treatment to the injured and asked Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha to pay a visit to the victims. *—PTI*

Former Andhra chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy interacts with a burn victim PHOTO: PTI

VOLCANO ERUPTS

A volcano in southwestern Iceland erupted on Thursday for the sixth time since December, spewing red lava through a new fissure on the Reykjanes Peninsula in Iceland. The eruption began following a series of strong earthquakes and within an hour a 4km fissure cut through the Sundhnúkur crater. Iceland authorities say the eruption's effects remain localised with road closures but do not threaten the population

PHOTO: X/ @GUIDETOICELAND

Food inflation 'endemic' in India due to climate change

In the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)'s Bulletin August 2024, deputy governor of the central bank Michael Debabrata Patra along with Joice John and Asish Thomas George have flagged how climate change is fuelling food price rise. Their verdict is concerning. Food price rise is now more due to the supply disruption caused by erratic weather and extreme climatic events.

So, the usual demand-supply matrix of determining price is no more due to the usual production and consumption demand interplay. Rather, climate change is impacting the production of crops, and thus the supply side of trade. This has now made food inflation 'endemic', as the study terms it.

This is a new reality and can't be managed through all well-established mechanisms that we deploy to control price. Also, this is concerning as with climate change as the new disruptor in the demand-supply domain, we have two impacts: the producers (farmers, mostly small and marginalised and account for the bulk of India's poor population) are losing income due to crop losses; and high food price restricts good diet intake, eventually affecting overall nutrition levels.

The study conducted by Patra brings out the fact that in recent decades, climate events have become the dominant reason for food price rise. In the period 2016-2020, the average food inflation was 2.9 per cent. This has more than doubled in the 2020s to an average of 6.3 per cent.

"A key distinguishing factor in this sharp divergence has been the incidence of multiple overlapping supply shocks due to climate events in the more recent period," says the study. These climate events impact spread and distribution of the monsoon, increasing temperature and impacting crop growth.

While the 2020s mark a period of normal monsoon, the report unveils the already known "highly skewed" distribution of the monsoon. "The broad-based and persistent food inflation that has taken hold during the last four years as a result, belies the conventional notion of food inflation pressures being sector or crop-specific localized factors and transitory," the study concludes.

The food inflation will increase by 2 per cent and overall inflation by 1 per cent by 2035 in India ***PHOTO: ANI***

Food inflation has become nearly universal in the last four years. For instance, of the last 48 months (June 2020-June 2024), 57 per cent of the months had reported food inflation above 6 per cent. Such is the consistency of supply side disruption due to climatic factors causing high food inflation that the study says that there is no more doubt of it being in transitory nature. This is where the food inflation has become endemic.

Earlier, researchers from the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research and the European Central Bank said global warming would certainly increase inflation, and it could go out of control in specifically developing countries including India.

The impact would be more pronounced in countries like Iraq, Mali, Mauritania and Saudi Arabia. In the case of India, the food inflation will increase by 2 per cent and overall inflation by 1 per cent by 2035.

The world has been talking about the 'cost of living crisis' since 2021. Climate change and its manifestation in food price rise, besides other living essentials, have been at core of this crisis.

The 'cost of living crisis' has led to people eating less food as they are not able to afford it, which in turn reflects on overall health indicators like nutrition security. People are not able to afford the defined 'health diet' as well.

There is a serious lack of studies that examine the impact of food price rise on the level of poverty, barring a few anecdotal ones. These studies do indicate co-relations. In the case of India, climate change impacts have led to massive crop damages which impact the income levels of farmers. At the same time, it might have impacted the availability of food for their consumption as well. The high price will deter those who buy food from having an adequate nutritious diet, particularly those who belong to economically marginalised groups.

Senior research fellows in the International Food Policy Research Institute Derek Headey and Marie Ruel have estimated that food inflation resulted in the stunting of children aged 24-59 months.

"Even brief nutritional insults in the first 1,000 days of life—from conception to roughly two years of age—can affect a child's growth for years into the future, and even determine adult stature. We found that a 5 per cent increase in food prices in the prenatal period increases the risk of subsequent stunting by 1.6% and severe stunting by 2.4%, consistent with food price shocks raising the risk of wasting among newborns and infants," they concluded.

— Courtesy, Down To Earth

SALAR ساڈہ

How does time change for astronauts stuck in space?

Two astronauts marooned in space may sound like the plot of a Hollywood blockbuster, but for two Nasa crew members, it is now a reality. Commander Barry Wilmore and pilot Sunita Williams are currently in limbo on the International Space Station (ISS).

They arrived in the Boeing Starliner spacecraft – the first test of the spaceship with astronauts. Wilmore and Williams were supposed to stay on the ISS for around eight days and return on the same spacecraft. But there is now debate about the safety of Starliner after it experienced helium leaks and thruster problems on its way to the ISS. In coming days, Nasa and Boeing may decide to clear Starliner to carry the astronauts back to Earth. This means their stay might not last too much longer. But if officials decide against Starliner, the astronauts face waiting an additional six months in orbit before returning. So how do astronauts cope with a potential six-month wait for a lift home?

Waiting for things is difficult at the best of times. Under normal circumstances, it is frustrating, stressful and anxiety-provoking. But in extreme situations, with high stakes, waiting can be purgatory. Part of the reason that waiting is difficult is that it distorts our sense of time. Think of last time you were waiting for a delayed train, test results or a text from a potential new partner.

Did it fly by or drag? For most people, time spent waiting crawls at a glacial pace. As a result, delays and periods of anticipation often feel much longer than they actually are.

Waiting slows our perception of time, because it changes the amount of time that we spend thinking about time. During normal daily life we often ignore time; our brains have a limited capacity. If time isn't important, we simply don't think about it, and this helps it to pass quickly. When we are waiting, our desire to know when the wait is over increases how much we think about time. This "clock watching" can make the minutes and hours feel like they are passing at a snail's pace. Stress, discomfort and pain exacerbate this effect, meaning that waiting in difficult situations can seem even longer. Waiting also slows our perception of time because it what we do and how we feel. Normal life is busy and full of ever-changing activities and interactions.

The sudden need to wait halts the flow of life, often leaving us with nothing else to do, thus increasing levels of boredom and frustration.

For the astronauts stuck on the ISS, anxiety about when they will return, limited opportunities for activities and fewer opportunities to contact friends and families combine to make their wait to return home feel significantly longer than six months – if it should come to that. However, as academics who research the effects of time on human psychology and biology, our ongoing work with crew members at research stations in Antarctica aims to shed light on whether waiting in extreme environments is different to waiting during normal daily life.

A year in Antarctica

While being stuck for six months on the ISS may sound like many people's worst nightmare, it is not uncommon for scientists to spend long periods isolated and confined in extreme environments. Every year, organisations such as the Instituto Antártico Argentino (which uses the Belgrano II Antarctic station), the French Polar Institute and the Italian Antarctic Programme, in cooperation with the European Space Agency (which all use Antarctica's Concordia station), send crews of people for up to 16 months to conduct research on the frozen continent.

During the March to October polar winter, teams spend six months in near darkness – and from May to August, in complete darkness – facing outside temperatures of up to -60C, wind speeds of 160 km/h (100 mph) and storms which prevent almost all outdoor activity. Limited internet coverage can also prevent constant communication with the outside world.

For the last year, we have researched how life in Antarctica influences people's experience of time. Each month, we asked crew members how time felt like it was passing in comparison to before their mission.

Trapped on base, with limited contact with the outside world, you might expect time to drag. However, our results suggest the opposite may be true. Analysis of crew members' experiences indicated that being constantly busy with complex tasks such as scientific research helped time to pass swiftly, according to 80 per cent of crew responses. Only 3 per cent of responses indicated that time actually dragged, and these reports occurred when nights were long and there was little to do.

—Courtesy, The Conversation

Astronauts Barry E Wilmore and Sunita Williams were supposed to stay on the ISS for around eight days and return on the same spacecraft but are stuck there till 2025 ***PHOTO: X/@NASA***

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Cases found in unexpected places as Mpox spreads globally

The Mpox virus is spreading internationally, and more countries, some very far from the initial location of the outbreak in East Africa, have confirmed cases of a new and potentially deadlier strain in the past week.

Where has Mpox spread?

So far, four countries – Sweden, Thailand, Philippines and Pakistan – have reported mpox cases outside the African continent. Fourteen countries in Africa have reported cases.

The World Health Organization (WHO) stated last week that the virus has become a "public health emergency of international concern". While the WHO has been at pains to emphasise that mpox is "not the new Covid", this is the second emergency alert relating to mpox from the global health agency in two years.

The current outbreak has been triggered by Clade 1, believed to be a more serious variant of the mpox virus than has appeared before and which can spread through skin-to-skin contact.

Mpox has been spreading in African countries since 2022 and was originally traced to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). In 2023, a new strain of the Clade 1 variant was discovered in the country – known as Clade 1b. African countries are reporting both Clade 1 and Clade 1b strains.

Simultaneously, a different outbreak of the virus's earlier Clade 2 variant is also spreading although at much lower levels.

The Clade 2 strain caused a multicountry mpox outbreak in 2022, which spread mainly via sexual contact. Cases of that strain had been reported in more than 100 countries by last month.

Clade 2 is believed to cause milder infections. The fatality rate is 0.2 percent compared with 3.9 per cent for Clade 1. The WHO officially declared the outbreak over in May 2023, but cases are still being recorded. According to data from the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) and the governments of Kenya, Mozambique, Uganda and the Ivory Coast, the Clade 1 variant of Mpox has been detected in the following countries this year: Burundi with eight cases and zero deaths; Cameroon with 35 and two deaths; Central African Republic with 213 and zero deaths; Ivory Coast with 28 cases and one death; Republic of Congo with 146 cases, one death; DRC with 13,791 and 450 deaths; Ghana with four cases, zero deaths; Liberia with five cases and zero deaths; Nigeria with 24 cases and zero death; Rwanda with two cases and zero deaths; South Africa with 22 cases and three deaths; Uganda with two cases and zero deaths; Kenya with one case, zero deaths and Mozambique with one case, zero deaths. The DRC is experiencing the biggest outbreak of the disease ever recorded with thousands of people infected as of 21August. The government declared an epidemic in December 2022. Nearly all reported cases – 96 per cent – across Africa are in the DRC, where children younger than 15 account for 60 per cent of the cases, Africa CDC said.

Democratic Republic of the Congo reported 13,791 cases and 450 deaths due to Mpox ***PHOTO: WHO***

The new Clade 1b strain is also rapidly spreading. It has been detected in least three countries neighbouring the DRC this year: Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda. These countries had not previously reported any cases since the outbreak began in 2022. So far, 541 deaths have been recorded in total from Mpox, with 535 in the DRC (97 per cent). The Africa CDC does not classify deaths according to strain. Most deaths have been children. In the Ivory Coast, authorities said, the outbreak is linked to the 2022 Clade 2 variant. In Asia: Philippines has one case and zero deaths; Thailand with one case and zero deaths; Pakistan has one case and zero deaths.

The Philippines, Thailand and Pakistan have all reported new Mpox cases this month. In The individual, identified as a 66-year-old European male, reportedly returned from an unnamed African country currently experiencing a "large" outbreak of the Clade 1 variant before reporting to health authorities. He reportedly does not have serious symptoms and was believed to have transited through a Middle Eastern country before arriving in Thailand. In the Philippines, authorities said the milder Clade 2 variant has been confirmed as the cause of the most recent case there and it has likely been spreading quietly for a while. The patient is a 33-year-old Filipino male with no travel history. It is the country's 10th confirmed case since 2022. Pakistani authorities said the first patient reported there this year is a male and he was infected with the Clade 2 variant. However, authorities said last week that they could not locate the infected patient. He is believed to have travelled to another province before the test results were released. Authorities said they are trying to trace him.

Sweden reported one case with zero deaths in Europe

Only one country in Europe – Sweden – has reported an Mpox case. The infection was reported on August 15 and has been confirmed to be the more serious Clade 1 variant.

It is "highly likely" that the European region will record more cases of the Clade 1 variant because of frequent air travel between Europe and Africa, according to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control.

However, sustained transmission might be low in Europe if cases are quickly diagnosed and if testing, surveillance and contact tracing are used, the agency said. The European Union has ruled out closing its borders to hard-hit countries.

Americas, Middle East, Oceania and Antarctica

No countries in North or South America have new cases of Clade 1 mpox so far.

However, countries in the Americas should be "alert" to possible Clade 1 and Clade 2 cases, the Pan American Health Organization said in a statement on 9 August.

—Courtesy, Al Jazeera

PHOTO: X@PROFITPK

Pakistan seeks $4B loan from Middle East banks

ISLAMABAD, 23 AUG

Cash-strapped Pakistan is in talks with banks in the Middle East to borrow approximately USD 4 billion to meet its external financial commitments for the current fiscal year, as part of the USD 7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF) currently pending for IMF's approval. Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb had a meeting with Adnan Chilwan, Group CEO of Dubai Islamic Bank, on Thursday, the Dawn newspaper reported on Friday. For the current fiscal year, Pakistan has pitched about USD 20 billion in foreign borrowing in the budget, besides another USD 3 billion rollover from the UAE that was reported separately for the balance of payments. Pakistan's reserves are estimated to grow to about USD 19-20 billion *—PTI*

Plane with Chinese crashes in Thailand, 9 feared dead

BANGKOK, 23 AUG

Rescue personnel despite an 11 hour search have found no survivors at the site of a crash of a small passenger plane in Thailand that took off from Bangkok airport. According to the Bangkok Post, the Thai Flying Service operated plane, a Cessna Caravan C208 (HS-SKR) with nine people, including five Chinese nationals onboard left Suvarnabhumi airport in Bangkok at 2.46 pm on 22 August reportedly lost contact with the Suvarnabhumi control tower at around 3pm. The plane on a domestic flight was bound for Ko Mai Chee airport in Trat in the country. The crash occurred at 3.18pm behind Wat Khao Din in Bang Pakong district and the wreckage of the plane was found in the mud in a mangrove forest near the temple. *—ANI*

NASA to decide if they can bring Sunita from space

WASHINGTON DC, 23 AUG

NASA said Thursday it will decide this weekend whether Boeing's new capsule is safe enough to return two astronauts from the International Space Station, where they've been waiting since June. Administrator Bill Nelson and other top officials will meet Saturday. An announcement is expected from Houston once the meeting ends. Astronauts Butch Wilmore and Sunita Williams launched aboard Boeing's Starliner on 5 June. The test flight quickly encountered thruster failures and helium leaks so serious that NASA kept the capsule parked at the station as engineers debated what to do. SpaceX could retrieve the astronauts, but that would keep them up there until next February. *—PTI*

Armed men kill 13 farmers in Nigeria's conflict-hit region

ABUJA, 23 AUG

Armed men killed at least 13 farmers during an attack in north-central Nigeria, a local official said on Thursday. Akilu Isyaku, a local government official, told the local radio station Crystal FM that herders and kidnappers are suspected in the attack. He suggested the farmers were killed for providing information to intelligence agencies about the movements of the gunmen. North-central Nigeria has been plagued by fights for control over water and land between nomadic herders and rural farmers. The violence has killed hundreds in the region so far this year. Once armed with sticks, the two sides now fight with guns that have been smuggled into the country. Both accuse the government of injustice and marginalisation, but the clashes have also taken on a religious dimension. *—PTI*

US SENDS $125M IN MILITARY AID TO UKRAINE

It includes javelins, anti-armour missiles, counter-drones

WASHINGTON, 23 AUG

The Biden administration will send about USD 125 million in new military aid to Ukraine, US officials said Thursday, even as Washington works to get a better understanding of Kyiv's incursion into Russia and how it advances the broader battlefield goals more than two years into the war.

US officials said the latest package of aid includes air defence missiles, munitions for High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS), Javelins and an array of other anti-armour missiles, counter-drone and counter-electronic warfare systems and equipment, 155mm and 105mm artillery ammunition, vehicles and other equipment.

The weapons are being provided through presidential drawdown authority, which means they are taken from Pentagon stockpiles and can be delivered more quickly.

The aid comes as Ukrainian forces continue to broaden their surprise offensive into Russia, where officials say they have taken about 100sq km of territory around Kursk. Russian troops, meanwhile, are making gains in the east, around the Ukrainian city of Pokrovsk, a critical logistics hub.Pentagon officials said that the US has been talking with Ukrainian leaders to assess their longer-term goals for the Kursk operation, particularly as they see Russia advancing near Pokrovsk. If Pokrovsk falls, the defeat would imperil Ukraine's defences and bring Russia closer to its stated aim of capturing the Donetsk region. Russian soldiers are now just 10km away. The US said Ukraine wants to build a buffer zone along the border. The latest package of aid brings the total amount of US security assistance to Ukraine to more than $55.7 billion since Russia's invasion in February 2022.

The latest package of aid brings the total amount of US assistance to Ukraine to more than $55.7 billion PHOTO: X@RUNEWS

Russia stops ferry service as Kyiv attacks Black Sea port Russia has suspended a ferry service operating between southern Russia and annexed Crimea after a Ukrainian attack on a Black Sea port on Thursday, Russia's transport ministry said on Friday. Ukraine's Navy said that it had destroyed a ferry at Port Kavkaz in Russia's Krasnodar region. It said the ferry was used to deliver fuel and weapons to Crimea, which Russia seized and annexed from Ukraine in 2014. *—ANI*

PUTIN ACCUSES KYIV OF STRIKING KURSK NUKE UNIT

MOSCOW, 23 AUG

Vladimir Putin, the President of Russia, accused Ukrainian forces of attempting to attack the Kursk Nuclear Power Station during an overnight raid, Al Jazeera reported.

Putin said on Thursday that Moscow had reported the event to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN's nuclear watchdog

Putin stated this as Ukrainian forces carried on fighting inside Russia for over two weeks following the start of a bold cross-border assault. *—ANI*

BASHES TRUMP AGAIN

Democratic presidential nominee Vice President Kamala Harris speaks at the Fiserv Forum during a campaign rally in Milwaukee PHOTO: PTI

In DNC, Harris supports Israel's 'right to defend'

CHICAGO, 23 AUG

United States Vice President Kamala Harris on Friday speaking at the Democratic Party National Convention said she will always stand up for Israel's right to defend itself and will ensure it has the ability to defend itself.

Harris said that now is the time to get a ceasefire deal done and added that the "devastating" bloodshed in Gaza is "heartbreaking."

"What has happened in Gaza over the past 10 months is devastating. So many innocent lives lost. Desperate, hungry people fleeing for safety over and over again. The scale of suffering is heartbreaking," Harris said.

"President Biden and I are working around the clock, because now is the time to get a hostage deal and a ceasefire deal done," she said in her nomination acceptance speech on 22 August on the final day of the Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

Harris used her presidential acceptance speech to present herself as a leader who could unite all Americans to chart a "new way forward" and warned them of "extremely serious" consequences of putting her Republican rival Donald Trump back in the White House.

She (Harris) caused the Attack of 7 October. Iran was BROKE - Didn't have money for Hezbollah! Harris hates Israel, she "didn't show up to Congress for Netanyahu's session

—Donald Trump, former president

Vice President Harris, who is of Indian and African heritage, on Thursday night accepted her party's nomination at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, becoming the second woman to do so for the Democratic Party after former first lady Hillary Clinton.

She fondly remembered her mother Shyamala Gopalan and said that she misses her every day, especially when she is on the verge of breaking the highest glass ceiling of the United States. *—ANI*

B'desh revokes Hasina's diplomatic passport

Sheikh Hasina's extradition falls within the framework of the extradition treaty signed between Bangladesh and India PHOTO: X@FRANCE24

DHAKA, 23 AUG

Bangladesh's interim government has revoked ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina's diplomatic passport along with all members of the former Cabinet, over two weeks after she resigned and fled to India following a student-led uprising against her government.

A statement by Home Affairs Ministry said diplomatic passports received by the former prime minister, advisors, ex-cabinet members and all members of the recently dissolved Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) and their spouses would be revoked immediately.

Diplomatic passports of the officials would also be revoked immediately upon termination of their tenure or appointment, it said.

The release said ordinary passports may be issued in their favour based on the reports of at least two investigating agencies, it added.

Hasina fled to India after being forced to resign in the face of a student-led mass uprising on 5 August.

According to the Indian visa policy, Bangladeshi citizens holding diplomatic or official passports are eligible for visa-free entry and a stay of up to 45 days. As of Thursday, Hasina has already spent 18 days in India.

The cancellation of her diplomatic passport and its associated visa privileges may put her at risk of extradition.

The extradition of Hasina, who is facing 51 cases, including 42 for murder, falls within the legal framework of the extradition treaty signed between Bangladesh and India, the BSS report said.

According to the treaty signed in 2013 and amended in 2016, "extradition may be refused if the offence for which it is requested is an offence of a political character." *—PTI*

Bangladeshis are not angry but hurt over Sheikh Hasina's stay in India. Politicians and security strategists in New Delhi must "rethink" their policy given the ground reality

—Abdul Moyeen Khan, a former Cabinet minister of Bangladesh

Murder case filed against cricketer Shakib during Bangladesh unrest

Shakib Al Hasan PHOTO: WIKIPEIDA

Star Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan has been named as one of the accused in an alleged murder that took place during the recent protests and violence in Bangladesh. The 37-year-old ex Bangladesh captain, a former lawmaker in the Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League regime, was among 147 people against whom charges have been filed, according to ESPNcricinfo. The murder case was filed by Rafiqul Islam in DhakaAdabor police station. Islam's son Rubel was killed on 7 August during the protest.

Last body from sunken Sicily superyacht found

Italian firefighter divers bring ashore the body of one of the victims of a shipwreck, in Porticello, Sicily, southern Italy, on Thursday

PORTICELLO, 23 AUG

The Italian Coast Guard said the body of the final missing person who was on a superyacht that sunk off the coast of Sicily has been found in the wreckage.

The woman's body was detected on Friday. She has not been identified, but Hannah Lynch, the 18-year-old daughter of British tech magnate Mike Lynch, is reportedly unaccounted for. The Lynch family was aboard The Bayesian, a 56-metre (184-foot) British-flagged yacht, when went down in a storm early Monday.

Civil protection officials said they believe the ship was struck by a tornado over the water, known as a waterspout, and sank quickly.

Mike Lynch's body was recovered Thursday. He had been celebrating his recent acquittal on fraud charges with his family and the people who had defended him at trial in the United States.

His wife Angela Bacares was among the 15 survivors. *—PTI*

Security stepped up at Germany NATO base

BERLIN, 23 AUG

Security at a NATO air base in western Germany has been raised because of intelligence information pointing to a "potential threat," and all staff not essential to missions have been sent home as a precaution, NATO said.

The Geilenkirchen air base, near the border with the Netherlands, is where the alliance's Airborne Warning and Control System, or AWACS, aircraft are based.

A post on the NATO AWACS fleet's account on social media network X late Thursday night announcing that "we raised the security level" did not elaborate on the nature of the potential threat. It said that "operations continue as planned."

The Geilenkirchen base said Friday that it had nothing to add to the statement and "the situation at the moment is unchanged."

German news agency dpa said a reporter saw police cars on the grounds of the air base. *—PTI*

AMID POLITICAL TURMOIL

3M stranded as deadly monsoon floods kill 13 in B'desh

DHAKA, 23 AUG

Monsoon rainfall-triggered floods in deltaic Bangladesh and upstream Indian regions killed at least 13 people and marooned or affected nearly 3 million others in this country, posing a huge administrative challenge to the newly installed interim government amid a political transition.

Bangladesh is crisscrossed by more than 200 rivers, 54 of them being transboundary rivers with upper riparian India, in four major basins. A depression (a system that brings in copious rainfall) in the Bay of Bengal has led to the current deluge with rivers in two basins – the north-eastern Meghna Basin and south-western Chattrogram Hills Basin – flowing above the danger mark.

Apart from the torrential rains, the overflowing rivers, El Nino and climate change phenomenon were the factors responsible for widespread flooding in the country, weather experts said on Friday.

Many people were forced to take refuge on highways or rooftops PHOTO: PTI

Communications with the central Feni, which is located almost midway between the capital Dhaka and the port city of Chattogram, was virtually cut off while flood waters largely submerged the district headquarters and the collapsed electricity supply system disrupted the telecommunication lines.

Forecasting Centre (FFWC) said heavy downpour was not observed in the past 24 hours and they are expecting the water level to recede gradually.

The FFWC office came under criticism for failure to predict the situation even as the officials attributed the situation to a lack of information from counterparts in the upstream Indian region.

According to local media reports, the situation became bizarre as local government representatives were unavailable or on the run because of their political affiliation after the ouster of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League regime in a student-people upsurge earlier in the month. That made it difficult for relief coordination, the media reports said. Hundreds of vehicles, includng passenger bus services and lorries, plying from the Chattogram port city to Dhaka and elsewhere were stranded due to the sudden rush of water blocking the two major highways, which in turn not just isolated people but hampered the rescue efforts. Several rivers surpassed their bank lines, particularly in north-eastern eastern and south-eastern Bangladesh inundating many cities and towns alongside several hundred villages killing the people, damaging the infrastructures and disrupting communication lines. Disaster management officials said most of the deaths were caused by drowning while electrocution and felling of trees were other reasons for the casualties but the sudden deluge caused by gushing waters split many families. *—PTI*

Rupee rises 4 paise to close at 83.89 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 23 AUG

The Rupee traded in a narrow range and settled higher by 4 paise at 83.89 (provisional) against the American currency on Friday, as traders remained cautious ahead of Fed Chair Jerome Powell's speech at the Jackson Hole Symposium. Forex traders said weak US Dollar, foreign fund inflows and a positive tone in the domestic markets supported the rupee. However, overnight gains in crude oil prices capped sharp gains. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened weak at 83.93 and touched an intraday high of 83.85 against the US dollar. On Thursday, the rupee traded in a narrow range and settled lower by 3 paise at 83.93 against the American currency. "We expect the rupee to trade with a slight negative bias as traders remain cautious ahead of Fed Chair Jerome Powell's speech at the Jackson Hole Symposium. —*PTI*

Gold prices decline by ₹ 350, silver drops ₹ 200

NEW DELHI, 23 AUG

Gold prices declined by Rs 350 to Rs 73,800 per 10 grams in the national capital on Friday, according to the All India Sarafa Association. In the previous session, gold of 99.9 per cent purity traded at Rs 74,150 per 10 grams. Silver declined by Rs 200 to Rs 87,000 per kg from Rs 87,200 per kg in the previous day. The yellow metal extended losses on Friday, weighed down by rising US Treasury yields and a recovery in the dollar index, market experts said. Prices of precious metal were also influenced by the minutes of the last Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) released by RBI on Thursday. Globally, gold at Comex gained USD 18.20 to trade at USD 2,534.90 per ounce. Silver was trading 1.24 per cent higher at USD 29.84 per ounce in the international markets. —*PTI*

JSW bags 300MW wind-solar hybrid project

NEW DELHI, 23 AUG

JSW Energy on Friday said its arm JSW Neo Energy has received a Letter of Award (LoA) from NTPC for setting up a 300 MW wind-solar hybrid power project. Following this capacity award, the company's total locked-in generation capacity has risen to 16.7 GW, which includes a total locked-in hybrid capacity of 2.6 GW, a company statement said. This project enhances the company's energy solution offerings and supports its transition towards becoming an energy products and services company, it said. JSW Energy has total locked-in generation capacity of 16.7 GW comprising 7.5 GW operational, 2.3 GW under construction across wind, thermal and hydro and RE pipeline of 6.9 GW. The firm also has 4.2 GWh of locked-in energy storage capacity through a battery energy storage system and hydro-pumped storage project. JSW Energy aims to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. —*PTI*

'E-power demand to grow by 15GW/ year for 6 years'

NEW DELHI, 23 AUG

EPower demand in the country will grow at a higher rate of 15GW per annum for next six years compared to 11GW per annum in last one decade, a senior government official said on Friday. By 2030, about 85 GW of additional demand will be added during the solar hours and during the non solar hours more than 90 GW will be added to the peak demand, said Additional Secretary Power Srikant Nagulapalli at an Industry Conclave organised by Indian Electricals & Electronics Manufacturers Association (IEEMA). The CAGR may not reflect these numbers truly, but if you see the absolute numbers it's a big jump he said. —*PTI*

Anil Ambani Group shares fall up to 10%

Reliance Power shares also dropped 5 per cent

NEW DELHI, 23 AUG

Shares of Anil Ambani-led group plunged on Friday after SEBI barred him and 24 other entities, including former key officials of Reliance Home Finance Ltd (RHFL), from the securities market for five years for diversion of funds from the company.

Shares of Reliance Infrastructure tumbled 10.07 per cent to settle at Rs 211.70 on BSE.

The stock fell 10.91 per cent to close at Rs 209.99 on the NSE. RHFL shares fell 5 per cent to close at Rs 4.46 on BSE.

The stock closed at the lower circuit limit of Rs 4.46 apiece on the NSE. Reliance Power shares also dropped 5 per cent to hit the lower price band of Rs 34.48 on NSE and 34.45 apiece on BSE. During the day, the stock of Reliance Power hit its 52-week high of Rs 38.07 and 38.11 on the NSE and BSE.

The 30-share BSE Sensex ended 33.02 points or 0.04 per cent higher at 81,086.21 and NSE Nifty edged up 11.65 points to close at 24,823.15.

Passing the final order in the RHFL matter, Sebi found that Ambani, with the help of RHFL's key managerial personnel, had orchestrated a fraudulent scheme to siphon off funds from RHFL by disguising them as loans to entities linked to him. In February 2022, markets watchdog Sebi had passed an interim order and restrained RHFL, Ambani and three other individuals (Amit Bapna, Ravindra Sudhakar and Pinkesh R Shah) from the securities market till further orders, for allegedly siphoning off funds from the company. —*PTI*

Shares of Reliance Infrastructure tumbled 10.07 per cent to settle at ₹211.70 on BSE *PHOTO: ANI*

- Passing the final order in the RHFL matter, Sebi found that Ambani, with the help of RHFL's key managerial personnel, had orchestrated a fraudulent scheme to siphon off funds from RHFL

NIFTY GAINS 11.65 POINTS

Stock markets marginally high in volatile trade

MUMBAI, 23 AUG

Benchmark Sensex and Nifty edged up in volatile trade on Friday following buying in blue-chip stocks such as ICICI Bank and Bharti Airtel amid mixed global trends ahead of the US Fed chair's speech at Jackson Hole Symposium.

Rising for the fourth straight session, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 33.02 points or 0.04 per cent higher at 81,086.21. In early trade, the benchmark declined 169.93 points or 0.20 per cent to a low of 80,883.26. Later, it bounced back 178.3 points or 0.21 per cent to hit a high of 81,231.49 but gave up gains towards the end. The NSE Nifty edged up 11.65 points or 0.05 per cent to close at 24,823.15 registering gains for the seventh session in a row.

From the Sensex pack, Tata Motors, Sun Pharmaceutical, Bharti Airtel, Bajaj Finserv, ICICI Bank, Mahindra & Mahindra and JSW Steel were the gainers.

Tech Mahindra, HCL Technologies, Asian Paints, Titan, Infosys, State Bank of India, Tata Consultancy Services and HDFC Bank were the laggards.

"Ahead of the FED chair Powell's speech, the Indian indices oscillated around the flat trajectory and mixed global market sentiments further catalysed this scenario," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services said.

Investors are exercising caution and awaiting Powell's signals for more insights on the interest rate path, Nair added.

European markets were trading with significant gains in the mid-session deals while Asian markets were mixed.

The US stock markets closed lower in overnight trade on Thursday. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 1,371.79 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data. Domestic institutional investors (DIIs) again bought equities worth Rs 2,971.80 crore on Thursday. —*PTI*

Rising for the fourth straight session, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 33.02 points or 0.04 per cent higher at 81,086.21 *PHOTO: PTI*

- Benchmark Sensex and Nifty edged up in volatile trade on Friday following buying in blue-chip stocks such as ICICI Bank and Bharti Airtel amid mixed global trends ahead of the US Fed chair's speech at Jackson Hole Symposium

India's forex reserves jumps to $674 billion

In the previous week, the forex kitty had dropped by USD 4.8 billion to USD 670.119 billion *PHOTO: PTI*

MUMBAI, 23 AUG

India's forex reserves jumped by $ 4.546 billion to $ 674.664 billion during the week ended 16 August, the Reserve Bank of India said on Friday.

In the previous week, the forex kitty had dropped by $ 4.8 billion to USD 670.119 billion. On 2 August, the overall reserves hit an all-time high of USD 674.919 billion.

In the week ended 16 August, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased by USD 3.609 billion to USD 591.569 billion, the data released on Friday showed. Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves. Gold reserves increased by $ 865 million to USD 60.104 billion during the week, the RBI said. The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were up by $ 60 million to USD 18.341 billion. India's reserve position with the IMF was up by $ 12 million to USD 4.65 billion during the week. —*PTI*

EQUITY SHARES OF ₹1,250 CR

Blackstone's diamond grading firm files for ₹4,000 cr IPO

NEW DELHI, 23 AUG

Blackstone-owned diamond grading firm International Gemmological Institute (India) Ltd, has filed preliminary papers with capital markets regulator SEBI to float Rs 4,000 crore through an initial public offering (IPO).

The initial share-sale is a combination of a fresh issue of equity shares worth Rs 1,250 crore and an Offer-For-Sale (OFS) valued at Rs 2,750 crore by promoter BCP Asia II TopCo Pte Ltd, an affiliate of Blackstone, according to the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP). The company proposes to utilize the proceeds from the fresh issue for the acquisition of IGI Belgium Group and IGI Netherlands Group from promoter and general corporate purposes.

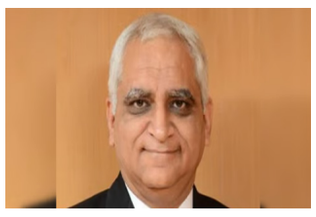
International Gemmological Institute (India) Ltd provides services related to the certification and accreditation of natural diamonds, laboratory grown diamonds, studded jewellery and coloured stones.

IGI is the world's second largest independent certification and accreditation services provider based on revenue for CY2023 among global peers for diamonds, studded jewellery and coloured stones certifications, with a global market share of approximately 33 per cent, according to the Redseer Report.

Axis Capital, Kotak Mahindra Capital Company, Morgan Stanley India Company and SBI Capital Markets are the book running lead managers to the issue. —*PTI*

The initial share-sale is a combination of a fresh issue of equity shares worth ₹ 1,250 crore *PHOTO: PTI*

- The company proposes to utilize the proceeds from the fresh issue for the acquisition of IGI Belgium Group and IGI Netherlands Group from promoter and general corporate purposes



Ashwani Bhatia *PHOTO: X*

BE EXTRA CAREFUL WHILE AUDITING SMES, SAYS SEBI

MUMBAI, 23 AUG

SEBI's whole-time member Ashwani Bhatia on Friday asked chartered accountants to be more diligent while auditing companies listed on the SME exchange platforms.

Addressing an industry event of CAs, Bhatia said it is important to look at the listed SMEs (Small and medium-sized enterprises) in a more careful way because the same companies will grow to be a part of the main board in the future.

"We have seen some challenges there (SME platform). We request you to be extra careful as far as SME IPOs and fundraising are concerned because these small companies will become much, much bigger going forward," the banker-turned-capital markets regulator said.

Bhatia expressed satisfaction with the progress of the SME platform, stating that Rs 14,000 crore has been raised by such entities, with Rs 6,000 crore being raised in FY24 alone.

He compared the CAs to "doctors", and added that they act as first-level regulators by ensuring orderly conduct of companies.

Bhatia said many Sebi investigations and orders, which take over a year to complete, may not be necessary at all if the CAs had done their work more diligently. —*PTI*

- Addressing an industry event of CAs, Bhatia said it is important to look at the listed SMEs (Small and medium-sized enterprises) in a more careful way because the same companies will grow to be a part of the main board in the future

Tata, ICICI sign pact for solar units

NEW DELHI, 23 AUG

Tata Power Solar Systems Ltd (TPSSL) has signed an agreement with ICICI Bank to provide financing for solar units to residential and corporate customers.

As part of the agreement, the customers can avail themselves of loans up to Rs 90 lakh with collateral-free options and tenure extending up to 5 years.

They can also get higher loans with collaterals with tenures of up to 20 years, said TPSSL, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Tata Power Renewable Energy Limited (TPREL).

"TPSSL announces its strategic collaboration with ICICI Bank to provide loans to finance the purchase of solar panels/ units for residential and corporate customers," the company said in a statement.

The customers can avail themselves of flexible down-payment option at 20-25 per cent of the loan amount, making it easier for them to invest in solar energy.

TPREL, an arm of Tata Power, is a developer of renewable energy projects. —*PTI*

TPREL, an arm of Tata Power, is a developer of renewable energy projects *PHOTO: PTI*

- The customes can get higher loans with collaterals with tenures of up to 20 years, said TPSSL, a wholly-owned subsidiary of TPREL

MapmyIndia claims are baseless: Ola co-founder

NEW DELHI, 23 AUG

Ola Co-Founder Bhavish Aggarwal has rejected claims of copying MapmyIndia, saying the map company was attempting to ride on Ola Electric's listing coattails.

The Chairman and Managing Director of Ola brand owner ANI Technologies told PTI that the company has sent legal notice to MapmyIndia but hasn't received any reply from them. "Empty vessels make more sound. These people woke up suddenly someday. Ola Electric is not even in the maps business. In the run-up to Ola electric IPO they just wanted to ride on its coattails. We have also given them legal notice, their reply has not come till date," Aggarwal said.Ola Electric got listed on the bourses on 9 August. The company raised Rs 5,500 crore from its initial public offering. MapmyIndia had sent them notice on 23 July -- three days before the red-herring prospectus was filed by Ola Electric. Homegrown digital navigation firm MapmyIndia has questioned claims of Ola parent ANI Technologies on developing a navigational map of India and called the announcement a "gimmick". When contacted MapmyIndia to check the status of their legal notice, the company shared a transcript of its earning call dated 12 August in which its CEO and ED Rohan Verma shared an update on legal notice sent to ANI Technologies. —*PTI*

Ola Co-Founder Bhavish Aggarwal *PHOTO: PTI*

RESIGNATION SPREE

Nestlé CEO resigns amid slow sales growth

WASHINGTON DC, 23 AUG

Nestlé said longtime Chief Executive Mark Schneider is leaving the company, as the world's largest packaged-foods maker grapples with slowing sales growth and a slumping share price.

The Swiss manufacturer of Kit Kat chocolate bars and Nescafe coffee said Schneider would be succeeded by company veteran Laurent Freixe, head of its Latin America business, starting Sept. 1. Schneider will resign from the board and hold no further position at Nestlé. The change comes a few weeks after Nestlé's shares fell to levels last seen in 2017, the year Schneider took the reins. The company last month cut its sales guidance for the year, as it lowered prices to encourage consumers to buy more. In the US, Nestlé's largest market—consumers have been tightening their belts, with companies from Starbucks to McDonald's reporting more cautious spending on food and drinks. Freixe joined Nestlé in 1986 and has served in a variety of roles including head of Europe and the Americas. Freixe said on a media call that he aims to expand market share and drive organic growth through a focus on core products, core platforms and a customer-oriented approach. Productivity and managing costs to achieve sustainable and profitable growth will be key, he said. —*Courtesy, WSJ*

Mark Schneider *PHOTO: X*

'Not for faint of heart': Sreela quits as Tesla VP

WASHINGTON DC, 23 AUG

Tesla Vice President Sreela Venkataratnam, an 11-year veteran of the company, that she would take time off work after stepping down from her role. Venkataratnam was one of the two most senior female executives at Tesla. Her departure leaves Laurie Shelby, vice president of environmental, health, safety and security, as the lone woman in Chief Executive Elon Musk's executive team. Venkataratnam said she played a strategic role in factory construction, the ramping up of vehicle manufacturing and the growth of Tesla's energy business. During her tenure, the company grew from a market capitalization of $ 4 billion to a height of USD 1 trillion in 2021. It is now trading at a market cap around USD 700 billion. It has experienced a wave of high-profile executive exits over the past year, including the two most senior deputies in Musk's inner circle—his chief financial officer and head of the energy business—who led Tesla through rapid growth in vehicle sales and global expansion. Tesla is facing growing competitive pressures in the EV market, as well as uncertainty from Musk's shifting strategy, in which he has positioned Tesla for another leg of growth by recasting the automaker as an artificial-intelligence and robotics company. —*Courtesy, WSJ*

Sreela Venkataratnam *PHOTO: PTI*

3 Indians named in Aus U19 women's squad for tri-series

MELBOURNE, 23 AUG

Cricket Australia has unveiled the squad for the upcoming Women's Under-19 Tri-series, set to take place from September 19 in Brisbane. Ribya Syan joins Samara Dulvin and Hasrat Gill as Australia Announces U19 Women's Squad for Tri-Series. The Youth Selection Panel has selected 15-player squads for each format (T20 and 50-over) for the Tri series in Brisbane and Gold Coast. Former Australian player Kristen Beams has been named as the head coach of the squad. The other two teams competing in this multi-format series are New Zealand and Sri Lanka. In this 14-day tri-series, Australia will play four T20s and two One-Day matches. Highlighting the squad are three promising talents of Indian origin--Ribya Syan, Samara Dulvin and Hasrat Gill. —*ANI*

PHOTO: X

Daniela Larreal Chirinos, 5-time Olympic cyclist, dies

LAS VEGAS, 23 AUG

Daniela Larreal Chirinos, a five-time Olympic cyclist who competed for Venezuela over the course of a decade, has died. She was 51. Larreal was found dead at home in Las Vegas the afternoon of Aug. 15 after a friend called police for a welfare check, according to a police report. The friend told officers he had not heard from Larreal for several days, which was out of character for her. Further details weren't immediately available, but Luis Vidal, a police department spokesperson, said homicide detectives were not called to investigate. The Clark County coroner's office said it was still working to determine the cause and manner of her death. —*PTI*

PCB sells broadcast rights for half of reserve price

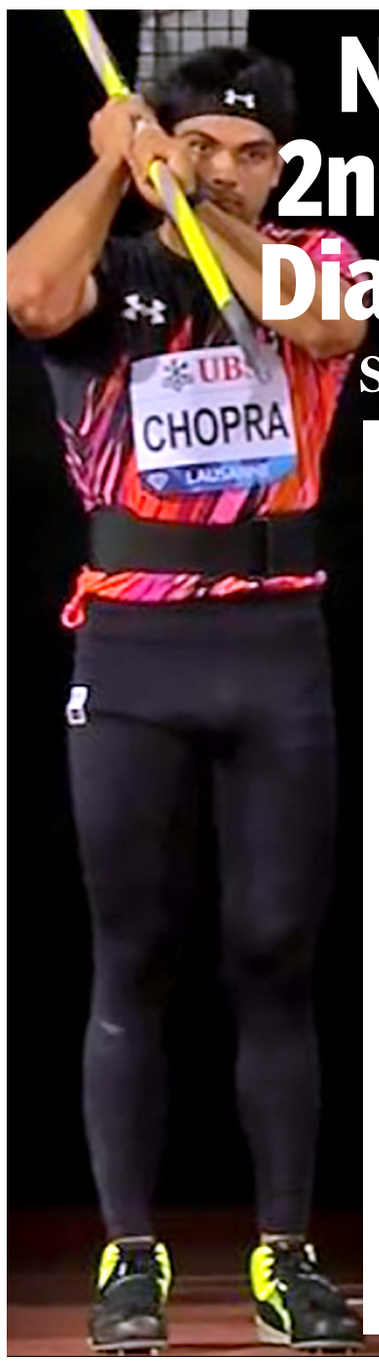
KARACHI, 23 AUG

Pakistan Cricket Board has settled for nearly half of its reserve price kept for selling broadcasting rights for the international home matches between the period of August 2024 and December 2026. The broadcasting rights for the Pakistan region have been sold for PKR 1.72 billion, which is at least PKR 1.48 billion less than the initial reserve price of PKR 3.2 billion the board kept for selling the rights. However, the PCB officials, without having sharing any figures, claim that the rights were sold at more than twice the amount from the previous rights cycle (FTP 2021 to 2024). The PCB said that the rights were awarded "following a transparent tender process". The rights are for 11 Tests, including seven in the 2024-25 season, 26 ODIs and 24 T20Is. —*PTI*

Tendulkar to flag off Mumbai Half Marathon

MUMBAI, 23 AUG

Legendary Sachin Tendulkar will flag off the Mumbai Half Marathon to be held here on Sunday with around 20,000 participants set to take part including more than 6,000 women. Tendulkar will flag off key races of the event from 5:00am in the morning at the Bandra Kurla Complex. The 10K race will see the maximum participation with over 8,000 registrations while the 21K half-marathon will witness a field of 4,000 runners, including some elite athletes from Maharashtra and elsewhere. The 5K will have over 5,000 runners while the 3K race will have more than 3,000. The race will also feature 1,500 runners from the Indian Navy while the organisers informed that there has been a 31 per cent hike in numbers of female participants this year. —*PTI*



Neeraj finishes 2nd in Lausanne Diamond League

Season's best with 89.49m

LAUSANNE, 23 AUG

Star Indian javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra finished second in the Diamond League here after producing a season's best effort of 89.49m from his last attempt in a gritty performance despite lingering fitness concerns.

The 26-year-old was at the fourth spot till the fourth round before sending his spear to 85.58m in his fifth attempt. He saved the best for the last and his final attempt measured 89.49m on Thursday, a marginal improvement on the 89.45m achieved in the Paris Olympics a few days ago.

He was in danger of missing the sixth throw but his fifth round effort of 85.58m saved him. Only the top three after five rounds get their respective final attempts.

Two-time world champion and Paris Olympics bronze-medallist Anderson Peters of Grenada won the event with a monster throw of 90.61m in the second round while Julian Weber of Germany took the third spot with 87.08m.

"The feeling wasn't great at first, but I am happy with my throw, especially the second (career) best throw on my last attempt. It was a tough start, but the comeback was really nice and I enjoyed the fighting spirit I showed," Chopra said after the event.

"Even though my early throws were around 80-83m, I pushed hard in the last two attempts finishing strong. Competing at this high level, it's important to stay mentally tough and fight through."

Peters, who had struggled to find form last year, led the competition here from beginning to end and he stamped his class with the 90m-plus throw in the last round.

He has a personal best of 93.07m achieved in 2022.

With seven points from Thursday's second-place finish, Chopra is joint third alongside Weber in Diamond League standings with 15 points. Peters jumped to top spot with 21 points. —*PTI*

No clear favourite for BCCI secy's post if Jay is chairman

GEORGETOWN, 23 AUG

The numbers will favour Jay Shah to mount the saddle as the next ICC Chairman but there is no clarity if he decides to join the world governing body, who will replace him as BCCI secretary.

Shah is supposed to have the backing of 15 out of 16 members in the ICC Board but has less than 96 hours to decide if wants to make the move when he still has one year left in his second consecutive term as BCCI secretary.

The new ICC chairman will take charge on 1 December, and the last date for filing nomination is 27 August.

The mandatory three-year cooling off period to make a comeback to the wealthiest cricket board will start for Shah after completion of his term in October 2025.

But there is a big question mark as to who will replace Shah in the BCCI since neither he himself nor the people close to him have yet divulged his immediate plans.

Is there a chance that a completely new face gets the top job?

"Obviously, it can happen as there are no hard and fast rules. But if you look at BCCI's power structure, president, secretary and treasurer are three key posts," said a former BCCI secretary.

"There are people who have been in the system and someone just coming and bypassing them normally doesn't happen. But first, is Jay ready to go to the ICC? Even if he doesn't go now, he can go anytime," he added. —*PTI*

TOP CONTENDERS

RAJIV SHUKLA

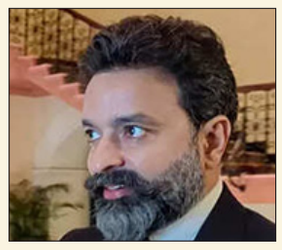
There is a possibility that BCCI rejigs the positions and asks current vice-president Shukla, a Congress MP in Rajya Sabha, to do the job for one year. Shukla wouldn't certainly mind becoming a secretary as BCCI vice-presidents are more like rubber-stamp.

ASHISH SHELAR

Then there is Maharashtra BJP heavyweight Shelar, who is BCCI treasurer and big name in MCA administration. However, being an influential name, he could be in the mix.

ARUN DHUMAL

The IPL Chairman has requisite experience to run the board. He has been a treasurer and now heads cash-rich league. Dhumal and Shukla swapping designations could be the easiest way out but often BCCI throws up names that no one could envisages.



DEVAJIT 'LON' SAIKIA

There is joint secretary, not the most popular name but a vital cog in current BCCI administration, who could also be elevated.

INTO THE SEMIS

Defending champions Mohun Bagan Super Giant downed a valiant Punjab FC 6-5 on 'sudden-death' penalties, to make the semi-finals of Durand Cup against Bengaluru FC on Friday PHOTO: X/ @MOHUNBAGANSG

Gukesh, Praggnanandhaa draw again in Sinquefield Cup

SAINT LOUIS, 23 AUG

World Championship challenger D Gukesh enjoyed an advantageous position against tournament co-leader Alireza Firouzja of France but eventually settled for a draw in the fourth round of the Sinquefield Cup,.

Gukesh, who is set to play the World championship match against Ding Liren of China next November, proved that he is made of sterner mettle as he made Firouzja's life tough.

Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa also drew his game against Anish Giri of Holland and almost at the half way stage in this 10-player round-robin tournament, the Indians stand at a level fifty percent score.

The day when Wesley So of United stated States won the lone decisive game, the news doing the round through unconfirmed sources was that Firouzja has been offered to play for United States.

For Pragg things were not difficult as he meticulously handled Anish Giri with black pieces and even though the Dutchman believed he had some chances, they were thwarted in no time. —*PTI*

Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa and D Gukesh PHOTO: PTI

India vs Aus: 'A' bowlers fight back

GOLD COAST, 23 AUG

India A bowlers led a spirited fightback but Australia A tightened grip on the unofficial one-off women's Test, with the hosts' overall lead surging to 192 runs here on the second day on Friday.

India A skipper Minnu Mani completed her match haul of 10 wickets but Kate Peterson returned an impactful 12-5-16-5 to hand Australia a slender 28-run lead in the first innings, as the visitors were bowled out for 184 in reply to the host's 212. India's set batters Tejal Hasabnis (32) and Shweta Sehrawat (40) were the first to fall as the tourists lost five wickets for 27 runs before Sayali Satghare (21), Mani (17) and Mannat Kashyap (19) put up 56 runs to deny Australia a huge lead. —*PTI*

AIG Open: Aditi & Diksha fight hard

ST. ANDREWS, 23 AUG

Indian golfers Diksha Dagar and Aditi Ashok made crucial birdies on their final holes to keep alive their chances of making the cut after the first round of the AIG Women's Open.

Aditi carded a 4-over 76 to be T-79 while Diksha was 5-over 77, sitting at T-100 as play ended late on the opening day which was marred by strong winds.

The cut looked likely at 3-over or 4-over after the second round.

For a long time, Diksha's score on the board showed a birdie on Par-5 14th, which was later corrected and it was shown as 5-over.

Aditi opened with two pars and then had a bogey on 12th and a double on 13th for 3-over first nine. She dropped further shots on first and second to go 5-over before the birdie on ninth made it 4-over for the day.

Diksha, T-21 last year at Walton Heath, was 5-over for her first nine holes, the back nine of the Old Course with bogeys on 10, 11, 13, 16 and 17.

Six players are in a share of fourth place with Korean duo Jenny Shin and Mi Hyang Lee, American pair Andrea Lee and Lilia Vu, Thailand's Patty Tavatanakit and Japan's Mao Saigo on three-under. —*PTI*

Indian Golfers Aditi Ashok and Diksha Dagar PHOTO: PTI

Shubhankar makes decent start in Denmark

AARHUS, 23 AUG

Shubhankar Sharma had identical scores of 2-under 69 in his first two rounds at the Danish Golf Championship and was lying tied-fifth on Friday, though the situation will change as the second round is still in progress.

Shubhankar, who took a short break after the Paris Olympics, was tied-14th when the first round ended late on Wednesday.

He began the week with four birdies and then added two more on ninth and 12th with bogeys on the 11th and the 13th.

He was still 4-under, but a double bogey on the Par-4 16th pegged him back further.

India's other player, Om Prakash was way behind at 5-over 76 and was tied-145th. He will need a very low round to have a chance of weekend play.

The 23-year-old made history last year as the first Danish winner of the event and he opened his bid to win a fifth DP World Tour title with five birdies and an eagle at the Lübker Golf Resort.

Eight golfers share the fifth spot on three-under par, including 2016 Ryder Cup player Rafa Cabrera Bello, Englishman Joe Dean and Denmark's Søren Broholt Lind. —*PTI*

Shubhankar Sharma PHOTO: PTI

B'desh trail by 132 runs against Pakistan in 1st test

RAWALPINDI, 23 AUG

The third day of the Pakistan vs Bangladesh first Test in Rawalpindi saw the visitors fight back despite 316/5 wickets down. Despite an early wicket.

Bangladesh has fought well and trails Pakistan by 132 runs at stumps on day three.

The visitors did lose their skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto but Shadman Islam (93), Litton Das, and Mushfiqur Rahim held the fort. Earlier, Saud Shakeel hit 141 while Mohammad Rizwan scored an unbeaten 171 his highest score in Tests as Pakistan declared on 448/6. Bangladesh 316 for 5 (Shadman 93, Mushfiqur 55*, Litton 52*, Mominul 50, Shahzad 2-47) trail Pakistan 448 for 6 dec by 132 runs.—*AP*

TO BENEFIT INDIA

ICC mulls ₹125cr fund to save Test cricket

SYDNEY, 23 AUG

International Cricket Council (ICC) is mulling a dedicated fund of at least USD 15 million for Test cricket that will help increase the players' match fee and address the migration of talent to lucrative T20 franchise leagues.

The initiative, which was was proposed by Cricket Australia (CA), has the support of BCCI Secretary Jay Shah, who is the front-runner to become the next ICC Chairman, and the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), a report in 'The Sydney Morning Herald' stated.

"The fund would ensure a minimum Test payment for all players, thought to be USD 10,000, and pay the costs of overseas tours for struggling countries," the report stated.

The fund is unlikely to benefit the three wealthiest cricket nations -- India, Australia, and England -- since they already offer substantial salaries to their players.

However, how much money is available for Test cricket from the ICC is also likely to depend on a dispute with broadcaster Star, the report added.

The BCCI had introduced an incentive scheme for India's men's Test cricketers earlier this year to encourage players to prioritise Test cricket and reward consistent performances in the longest format of the game.

Under the new scheme, a player who plays at least 75 per cent of India's Test matches in its annual cycle, from October to September, will earn a whopping Rs 45 lakh per match in addition to the Test match fees of Rs 15 lakh.

The players who feature in the 50-75 per cent games bracket will earn a bonus of Rs 30 lakh per match. The non-playing members -- if selected in the squad -- will be paid half the amount. —*PTI*

The fund would ensure a minimum Test payment for all players PHOTO: PTI

Warne's death felt like a personal loss: Kuldeep

MELBOURNE, 23 AUG

Indian wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav has revealed that the death of Australian legend Shane Warne two years ago felt like the loss of a family member to him as he always believed that there was a connection between them.

Kuldeep, who is on a short family trip in Australia, visited the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG), the home ground of his "idol" where he posed for a photo with Warne's statue outside the stadium.

"Shane Warne was my idol, and I had a very strong connection with him. I still get emotional when I think about Warnie -- it feels like I've lost someone from my family."

He, however, did not elaborate on his equation with the legend, who died of a cardiac arrest while on a holiday in Thailand in 2022.

The T20 World Cup winning cricketer's trip Down Under comes just a few months before the Border Gavaskar Trophy, scheduled to begin on 22 November in Perth.

"I am looking forward to the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, and we're anticipating a great cricket contest between Australia and India this year," he said. —*PTI*

Kuldeep Yadav PHOTO: PTI